Islamic Modernism in China:
Chinese Muslim Elites, Guomindang Nation-Building, and the Limits of the Global *Umma*, 1900-1960

John Tseh-han Chen

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ABSTRACT

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Modern Chinese Muslims' increasing connections with the Islamic world conditioned and were conditioned by their elites' integrationist politics in China. Chinese Muslims (the "Hui") faced a predicament during the Qing and Ottoman empire-to-nation transitions, seeking both increased contact with Muslims outside China and greater physical and sociopolitical security within the new Chinese nation-state. On the one hand, new communication and transport technologies allowed them unprecedented opportunities for transnational dialogue after centuries of real and perceived isolation. On the other, the Qing's violent suppression of Muslim uprisings in the late nineteenth century loomed over them, as did the inescapable Han-centrism of Chinese nationalism, the ongoing intercommunal tensions between Muslims and Han, and the general territorial instability of China's Republican era (1911-49). As a result, Islamic modernism—a set of positions emphasizing both reason and orthodoxy, and arguing that true or original Islam is compatible with science, education, democracy, women's rights, and other "modern" norms—took on new meanings in the context of Chinese nation-making. In an emerging dynamic, ethos, and discourse of "transnationalist integrationism," leading Chinese Muslims transformed Islamic modernism, a supposedly foreign body of thought meant to promote unity and renewal, into a reservoir of concepts and arguments to explain and justify the place of Islam and Muslims in China, and in so doing made it an integral component of Chinese state- and nation-building.

"Islamic Modernism in China" argues that Chinese Muslims' transregional engagement with Islamic modernism did not subvert but enabled the Chinese government's domestic and

foreign policies toward Muslims, and ultimately facilitated the nationalization of Muslim identity in modern China. From Qing collapse through the Second World War, urban coastal Chinese Muslim religious and political elites imported, read, debated, disseminated, and translated classic Islamic texts and modern Muslim print media, while establishing their own modernist schools and publications. Yet those same figures, through those same practices and institutions, increasingly wielded an image of Islamic authority and authenticity in support of the nationalist Guomindang government's efforts to develop, integrate, and Sinicize China's frontiers, including the predominantly Sufi Muslim communities of the Northwest.

In the 1930s and early 1940s, integrationist Chinese Muslim elites further mobilized modernist narratives of Islam's rationality, peacefulness, and past and present "contributions" to China. For example, they responded to Islamophobic misperceptions about halal by arguing that Islamic medicine was an important part of Chinese medicine. They also dispatched nationalistic goodwill delegations to the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and China's own frontiers during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45), to pursue cultural cooperation and spread anti-Japanese propaganda. At the same time, in contrast to this instrumentalized Islam, certain Chinese Muslim scholars studying in Cairo instead articulated an expansive, democratized version of the Islamic concept of independent human reason (*ijtihad*) as the basis for a more inclusive vision of both Chinese nationalism and the global Islamic community (*umma*). The opportunity to pursue this or any other alternative to mere integrationism soon evaporated, however, as the renewed Chinese Civil War (1945-49) split the Chinese Muslim elites across the Mainland, Taiwan, and a variety of Muslim and non-Muslim countries. Thereafter, the Chinese Muslim elites largely became marginalized from high politics in the era of Cold-War and decolonization. Many of their once-contingent narratives of history and identity, however, have

nevertheless been normalized as the canonical truth of Chinese Islam to this day, quietly informing China's minority policies, foreign relations, and rhetoric of the "New Silk Road."

"Islamic Modernism in China" is a history of the subsumption of modern forms of mobility by modern structures of power. It narrates an assertion of difference in the context of multiple, partially overlapping integrations: the integration of a Han-centric idea of the Chinese nation-state, of an Arabo-centric idea of the Islamic world, and of a Eurocentric system of global infrastructures, institutions, networks, and knowledge. It de-parochializes the modern history of Chinese Muslims, showing how they epitomized aspirations and challenges common to Muslim minorities across many large non-Muslim societies and, to an extent, to modern Muslims everywhere. Using a wide range of new or under-studied archival and published sources in Chinese and Arabic, it connects questions of the meaning and scope of Islam, Islamic community, and Islamic modernism (scholarship on which tends to prioritize the Arab Middle East and relations with the West) to questions of religion and state in modern China (scholarship on which tends to prioritize popular spirituality and the official Confucian system, as well as relations with the West). As such, it presents Sino-Islamic transregional interactions beyond the lens of Western influence, yet also uncovers new trajectories by which Western concepts ("religion," the "nation-state," the "Islamic world") became universalized. Overall, it moves beyond a circulation-based understanding of global encounters, and instead maps the contingent ways in which forms of mobility became pressed into the service of hegemonic processes of state- and nation-building: how flows of people and ideas created borders rather than simply crossing them.

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To my parents

and in memory of

John Aska (1923-2012)

Dr. Tse-ping Chen 陳則平 (1919-2007)

Dr. Tseh-han Chen 陳澤漢 (d. 1965)

INTRODUCTION

> "Long live Muslims! And long live the Republic of China!"
> -'Abdullah Ma Linyi, GMD Deputy Minister of Education, 1912[1]

Islam and Chinese Nation-Making

The above valediction concluded an address to a gathering of prominent Chinese Muslim *ulama* (Islamic scholars), government officials, community leaders, and publishers held at Beijing's millennium-old Niujie Mosque at 2:00p.m. on 22 July 1912. These leading Chinese Muslims had seen their world transformed overnight: the nationalist revolution of October 1911 and abdication of the last Qing emperor in February 1912 had just brought an end to twenty centuries of imperial dynasties—and with that, new possibilities for connecting with Muslims outside China, as well as new pressures to articulate their identity and safeguard their status within China. Decrying Qing oppressiveness yet looking to the future, this group of elite Chinese Muslims met at Niujie to establish China's first ostensibly nationwide Islamic organization, known as the Chinese Islamic Progress Association (*Zhongguo huijiao cujinhui*).

The Chinese Islamic Progress Association's founders aimed first and foremost to improve Islamic education, a platform that struck a judicious balance between their aspirations to know their fellow Muslims abroad and their anxieties about asserting belonging in China.

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[1] This declaration (Ar. *li-yahya al-muslimun wa-l-jumhuriyya*; Ch. unknown, but perhaps *zhu huimin wansui, minguo wan sui*) was attributed to 'Abdullah Ma Linyi in an Arabic article in *al-Manar* on the foundation of an "Islamic association in Peking," which claimed to have obtained the information from a Russian newspaper identified only as "The Times" (Ar. *jaridat al-waqt al-rusiyya*). I have not yet determined which Russian periodical this may have been. 'Inayatullah Ahmadi, "Ahwal Muslimi al-Sin: Jam'iyya Islamiyya fi Bikin [Conditions of the Muslims of China: An Islamic Association in Beijing]," *al-Manar* (1 Dhu-l-qa'da 1330 / 11 October 1912), p. 791.

Extant Chinese sources on the founding of the Chinese Islamic Progress Association are relatively sparse. The event is mentioned in Yufeng Mao, "Muslim Educational Reform in 20th-Century China: The Case of the Chengda Teachers Academy," *Extrême-Orient Extrême-Occident* 33 (2011): pp. 149. Mao cites Ma Bozhong, "Tang Kesan yu chengda shifan [Tang Kesan and the Chengda Academy]," *Zhongguo musilin* 5 (2004): p. 26.

Chinese Muslim education reform reflected the priorities of the association's chairman, Imam 'Abd al-Rahman Wang Kuan (a.k.a. Wang Haoran, 1848-1919), who had traveled to Cairo and Istanbul from 1905-07, was impressed by Egyptian and Ottoman Muslims' emphasis on education, and was and is remembered as one of the first major figures to promote both Islamic modernism and Chinese nationalism among Chinese Muslims.[2] Wang instituted his vision of reformed Muslim education through a new-style school established at Niujie itself, also in 1912. This vision sought to attune Islam and Muslims in China to trends in the Islamic world outside China; to lift them out of an alleged state of "backwardness" and "ignorance," and set them firmly on the path to progress and modernity; and encourage them to accept the new Chinese nation and participate in its society and politics. In the decades to come, Wang's students and associates would work to implement this vision in dialogue with leading Islamic modernists across the Indian Ocean and Middle East, and with the highest levels of China's government (primarily the Guomindang or Kuomintang; hereafter GMD).

News of the Chinese Islamic Progress Association's founding traveled both high and far—prefiguring Chinese Muslim religious and political elites' increasingly close relations with both the Chinese government and with Muslims beyond China. Yuan Shikai (1859-1916), president of the new republic, sent 'Abdullah Ma Linyi (1865-1938), a Chinese Muslim and the new Republican government's deputy minister of education, to represent him at the meeting. Before long, meanwhile, an Arabic-language summary of the meeting, based on a Russian

[2] Ding Yimin, ed., *Zhongguo huizu mingren cidian* [Dictionary of Chinese Muslim Personages] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1995), p. 269; Ma Shanting, "Wang Haoran ahong yishi (yi) [The Passing of Imam Wang Haoran (I)]," *Yuehua* 6/19-20-21 (1934), p. 25; Ma Shanting, "Wang Haoran ahong yishi (er) [The Passing of Imam Wang Haoran (II)]," *Yuehua* 6/31-32-33 (1934), pp. 29-30; "Beiping: Jinian Wang Haoran ahong [Remembering Imam Wang Haoran of Beijing]," *Yuehua* 7/9 (1935), p. 28; Ma Shanting, "Wang Haoran ahong yishi (san) [The Passing of Imam Wang Haoran (III)]," *Yuehua* 7/15 (1935), p. 12; Yin Boqing, "Wang Haoran ahong zhuanlue: sheng yu Daoguang nian [A Brief Biography of Imam Wang Haoran, Born in the Daoguang Era]," *Zhongguo musilin* 2 (1982): p. 8.

source, appeared thousands of miles away in the 11 October 1912 issue of *al-Manar* (1898-1935), the world's leading Islamic modernist periodical published in Cairo.[3]

The question of Islam's relationship to modern nationhood had come to preoccupy Muslim leaders in Egypt, India, Indonesia, and elsewhere, whose writings the Chinese Muslims read and many of whom they would eventually meet. Incidentally, the news of the Chinese Islamic Progress Association's founding reached the Middle East just as the Balkan Wars (October 1912-July 1913) were breaking out and as a trend of Arabism was rising against the Committee of Union and Progress's Turkification policies—a chain of events that finally ended the Ottomans' long-standing status as a multi-ethnic empire. Just as late-Ottoman models were inspiring Wang Kuan's Islamic educational reforms in China, the Ottoman system itself was giving way to essentially the same forces of nation-statism facing Chinese Muslims (and Chinese generally). Viewing one another across formidable linguistic barriers and geographical distances, like-minded Muslims at all ends of the Asian continent confronted this new but apparently inexorable political form, the nation-state.[4]

This fraught yet unavoidable question of Islam's role in modern nationhood was especially consequential for Muslim minorities in large non-Muslim countries such as China, who faced a question of difference and divided loyalty. This problem stood out clearly enough at the Chinese Islamic Progress Association's founding. Ma Linyi offered a set of timely and carefully crafted reflections:

> The nation has now entered the most critical phase in its development, and the need for cohesion and unity is stronger than at any previous time. Muslims' ardent

[3] Ahmadi, "Ahwal Muslimi al-Sin." As we will see, Chinese Muslims eventually became aware of *al-Manar*, and some may have read it, but it is unlikely that this was the case in 1912. Chapter One will provide evidence that *al-Manar* remained novel or unknown to urban coastal Chinese Muslims even in the early 1930s.

[4] The literature on the empire-to-nation transition is rightly enormous. One representative work that places the Middle Eastern and East Asian cases in comparative context is Joseph W. Esherick and Hasan Kayali, eds., *Empire to Nation: Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield, 2006).

> capacity for friendship and bravery is well known, [as are] their efforts on behalf of the nation. The truth is that we are all the children of a single nation. Our urgent task is to save the nation from destruction and to exert ourselves on behalf of the Republic with the best of our moral and material resources…

Such statements were natural enough amidst acute crises of territory and identity such as those China faced after the 1911 revolution. Perhaps more surprisingly, however, Ma continued:

> Muslims are heroes of the nation. Moreover, the loftiness and holiness of Islam is manifest to all the people of China, and the Republican government regards Islam in the same terms. Muslims are free to practice their religion. Muslims [in China] have preserved their religion up to this point by continuing to attain some knowledge of the Arabic language. Thus the first piece of advice I have for you is to promote this language among the Muslims of China.[5]

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Ma Linyi's words at the Chinese Islamic Progress Association's founding point to the major questions of this study. How did Islamic transnationalism and Chinese nationalism influence one another, according to and through the intermediation of urban coastal Chinese Muslim elites? Why, from the perspective of these Chinese Muslim elites, should the study of Arabic and the reform and modernization of Islam make them better citizens of a Chinese nation-state, especially one so often concerned with the assimilation of China's frontier peoples? From the perspective of that Chinese state, how much difference could its citizens, which it hoped would include all former subjects of the Qing, exhibit? What roles could or should Islam and Muslims, as such, play in the making of a new China? How could those roles be made to serve the larger aims of the Chinese state, such as promoting nationalism, conducting foreign policy, and retaining control of vast, contested, multi-ethnic and multi-religious frontier regions?

[5] Ahmadi, "Ahwal Muslimi al-Sin," p. 791. While the prioritization of Arabic education certainly would have appealed to Rashid Rida and many readers of *al-Manar*, the consistency between this account of Ma's words and most other sources I have seen on modern urban coastal Chinese Muslims, in both Arabic and Chinese, leads me to believe that Ahmadi was not significantly tailoring his description of the Chinese Islamic Progress Association's founding or Ma's address for his Arabic-speaking audience.

Furthermore, from the perspective of Muslims outside China, what was the significance of learning about China and (re)forging contact with China's Muslims? Did Southeast Asian, South Asian, and Middle Eastern Muslims understand that rediscovery in the same terms as Chinese Muslims? More broadly still, what definitions of Chinese, Muslim, and Chinese Muslim identity were possible in a world without emperors, sultans, or caliphs—and newly transformed through steamships, newspapers, and foreign knowledge—and why? To what extent was direct, autonomous translation or communication possible between Chinese and Arabic speakers, and to what extent did such "non-Western" relationships, and the conceptual commensurations they produced, instead reflect and internalize visions of self and other informed by Orientalist and missionary knowledge (even in the absence of direct involvement from such actors)?

Chinese Muslim religious and political elites' (re)discovery of the Islamic world outside China both conditioned and was conditioned by their integrationist politics in China, from Qing and Ottoman collapse through the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45) and into the early PRC (1949-60). Chinese Muslims—the group now known as the "Hui," though the term itself was in flux in the early twentieth century—faced a predicament at the crucial moment of the Qing and Ottoman empire-to-nation transitions, seeking both increased contact with Muslims outside China and sociopolitical security within the new Chinese nation. Against a backdrop of violence and territorial crisis, leading Chinese Muslims saw little choice but to cast their lot in with the newest rulers of a land they had inhabited for over a millennium, with consequences for the entire definition of their community that have endured to this day. As a result, Islamic modernism—a set of positions emphasizing both reason and orthodoxy, and arguing that true or original Islam is compatible with science, education, democracy, women's rights, and other

"modern" norms—took on new meaning in the context of Chinese nation-making.[6] In an emerging dynamic, ethos, and discursive orientation I call "transnationalist integrationism," elite

[6] Scholarship offers a wide range of alternative terms capturing most or some of the aspects of "Islamic modernism." See especially Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1962; Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983); Nikki R. Keddie, "Islamic Philosophy and Islamic Modernism: The Case of Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani," *Iran* 6 (1968): pp. 53-56; David Dean Commins, *Islamic Reform: Politics and Social Change in Late Ottoman Syria* (New York: Oxford UP, 1990); Amal Ghazal, "Sufism, Ijtihad, and Modernity: Yusuf al-Nabhani nin the Age of 'Abd al-Hamid II," in *Sonderdruck aus Archivum Ottomanicum*, edited by György Hazai (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2001), pp. 239-72; Charles Kurzman, ed., *Modernist Islam, 1840-1940: A Sourcebook* (New York: Oxford UP, 2002); Umar Ryad, *Islamic Reformism and Christianity: A Critical Reading of the Works of Muhammad Rashid Rida and His Associates, 1898-1935* (Leiden: Brill, 2009); Indira Falk Gesink, *Islamic Reform and Conservatism: Al-Azhar and the Evolution of Modern Sunni Islam* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010); Mark Sedgwick, *Muhammad Abduh* (New York: OneWorld, 2010); Marwa Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic, 1860-1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

Scholars often treat "Islamic reformism" and "Islamic modernism" as synonyms. Despite her title, Gesink uses the terms "modernists" and "modernism" throughout her study, and considers the modernist aspects of al-Azhar's reforms in great depth. Sedgwick, meanwhile, also characterizes Muhammad 'Abduh as a modernist, for example on pp. 127-28, though he ties this identity to a large extent to liberalism. Elshakry's *Reading Darwin in Arabic* in particular supports an expansive definition of modern Islamic thought as intrinsically engaged with questions of science and political and social life, rather than merely the reform of doctrines and curriculua.

One could argue that there is a stronger etymological basis for "Islamic reformism," given the prominence of the Arabic term *al-islah* ("reform") in the writings of relevant individuals. On the other hand, across modern Muslim societies, the so-called reformers were just as often referred to "renewers" (*mujaddidun*), which one could argue meant not only "revivers" of the essence of Islam in the narrow "religious" or doctrinal sense, but rather as "bringers of the new" or "enacters of the new." As Gesink states on p. 6 of *Islamic Reform and Conservatism*, the term "modernizers" (*muhaddithun*) was also used. The term "reform" or "reformism" alone risks suggesting that Muslim thinkers were primarily concerned with amending Islam only as a "religion" and, concomitantly, that their attention to politics, society, the economy, culture, and history should not be regarded as integral to their thought as Muslims. I argue, however, that this latter set of concerns was integral to Chinese Muslims' (and other Muslims') status, thought, and self-identification as Muslims, and therefore generally opt for "Islamic modernism."

Among other things, this position would appear to be consistent with Shahab Ahmed's critique of the tendency to "legal supremacism" in the study of Islam and to the privileging of "prescriptive" discourses and practices over "exploratory" ones. It is also consistent with Ahmed's (and Talal Asad's, and many others') critique of "religion" as being a Eurocentric concept that should not be applied descriptively to other belief systems without qualification. Islam, Ahmed argues, is best not thought of as a "religion," especially due to its lack of a hierarchical "church" institution equivalent to that of Christianity; rather, Islam is, as Muslims themselves say *din wa dawla*—which in light of Ahmed's arguments would probably best be translated as "a comprehensive system for both truth-making and social life" (often misleadingly rendered as "both a religion and a state"). Shahab Ahmed, *What is Islam? The Importance of Being Islamic* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2015), pp. 176-97; Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1993); Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Islamic History as a Concept," in William Cantwell Smith, *One Understanding Islam: Selected Studies* (The Hague: Mouton, 1981), pp. 3-25; Timothy Fitzgerald, "A Critique of 'Religion' as a Cross-Cultural Category," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 9 (1997), pp. 91-110; Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions; Or, How European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

In its (provincialized) European context, the term "religion" entered English as early as the twelfth century from Latin *religio*, related to Latin *religare*, "to bind." The original meaning is thought to have related to "life under monastic vows," or more generally to the reinforcement of bonds (hence the particle *lig-*, as in "ligament" or "obligation"). It is additionally believed that this particle *li-* may have some connection to "law" (Latin *lex, legis*) and/or to "to read" (*lego, legere*). Historically speaking, one could argue that the term "religion" was connected, from a very early point, to the notion of ontological separation of the realm of belief from the realm of politics, and even the subordination of the former to the latter, as in the famous principle established by the Peace of Augsburg

Chinese Muslims transformed Islamic modernism, a "foreign" body of thought meant to promote Islamic unity and renewal, into a reservoir of concepts and arguments that explained and justified Islam and Muslims' place in a Chinese nation-state. In so doing, they made Islam and Muslims integral to modern Chinese state- and nation-building.

Transnationalist integrationism held the key to resolving Chinese Muslims' modern predicament as their elites understood it. Leading Chinese Muslims tacitly accepted that there was no alternative but to find a way to belong in China: to strive to configure the category of China as something that could accommodate the category of Islam, and vice versa. Regardless of what their hearts may or may not desire, Chinese Muslims ultimately could not "return" to the Islamic world outside China in a world of nation-states. Instead, they argued that coming to know Islam and Muslims outside China could enrich the process of integration while undoing the effects of centuries of isolation.

In contrast to the assertions of their elites, Chinese Muslim communities in the early twentieth century were in fact highly fragmented. They lived everywhere among the Han, but they also came to live under Japanese rule in Manchukuo, as well as alongside the many other minorities in Yunnan, in Xinjiang, and on the Tibetan plateau. At the same time, many remained interconnected through trade and study, forming what Jonathan Lipman has evocatively termed a "patchwork-network society."[7] Following Lipman and others, I argue that the contrast between

(1555), *cuius regio eius religio* ("Whose realm, his religion"), and more broadly in the European "Wars of Religion" of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries generally considered to have ended with the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). On the significance of Europe's early modern period for the emergence of the concept of religion, see Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, pp. 40-43. Asad's overall argument is still true, however: that "religion" as it is currently understood—apolitical, private, non-repressive, distinct from other modes of knowing the world, and authorizing of certain modes of history-making—is a product of European modernity. Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, Introduction and Ch. 1.

[7] Jonathan Lipman, "Patchwork Society, Network Society: A Study of Sino-Muslim Communities," in *Islam in Asia*, vol. 2, edited by Raphael Israeli and Anthony Johns (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1984), pp. 246-74.

Northwest frontier Muslims versus urban coastal Muslims was an especially important one. Frontier Muslims belonged predominantly to Sufi orders dating to the eighteenth century or earlier, whereas urban eastern Muslims were mostly *gedimu* (from Arabic *qadim*, meaning the "ancient ones") claiming descent from the first Arabs and Persians to arrive in China, or, increasingly, similarly descended Islamic modernists who did not identify with any traditional subgroup. As was the case with the Han Kitab authors described by Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, it was primarily the latter group—the much better educated urban coastal Muslims—who tended to be politically integrationist, and who claimed to speak for Chinese Muslims as a whole, despite lacking the consent of those spoken for.[8] In other words, in the Republican era, the frontier-urban divide was becoming not only doctrinal, economic, or cultural, but political: by the 1930s, the frontier Muslims became the target of policies articulated by the urban eastern Muslims in conjunction with the central government.[9]

The twin afflictions of violence and real and perceived isolation from the Islamic world explain Chinese Muslim elites' prevailing orientation of transnationalist integrationism. At the dawn of the twentieth century, as Muslims elsewhere looked hopefully to the model of Japan (then not yet a colonial power), called for the reform of the besieged Ottoman Empire, or supported the nationalist cause in Egypt and India, Chinese Muslims were undergoing one of the most precarious and isolated phases of their entire history. Only a handful per generation traveled to the Middle East. Eventually, Muslims across the frontier regions had risen against the Qing in the 1860s and 1870s, in some cases forming independent states—events the Republican-

[8] Similarly to Lipman, Zvi Ben-Dor Benite states that "in the early modern period there was no such thing as *a* Chinese Muslim identity, despite claims to the contrary by the state (pre- and post-imperial) or by early scholars and observers of Chinese Islam." Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, p. 6.

[9] The frontier-coastal divide was by no means absolute—Yunnan and Henan do not quite fit, and many Muslims went back and forth between regions—but notionally this divide was highly relevant to Islam's role in state policy.

era Chinese Muslim elites attributed to their incorrect understanding of Islam *and* insufficient contact with Chinese culture. The Qing responded by dispatching Zuo Zongtang (1812-1885) and his predominantly Han Hunan army to the frontiers, where he ruthlessly crushed the Chinese Muslim and Uyghur rebellions, killing thousands and forcibly relocating thousands more.[10] While the 1911 revolution only lightly touched China's frontiers, warlord rule and natural disasters meant perennially adverse conditions for ordinary Muslims across the Northwest. The result was local eruptions of violence between Muslim and Han Chinese. The Muslim press reported at least one claim of multiple arson attacks against mosques.[11] At the same time, Islamophobic materials regularly made their way into the Han press, leading to protests and intercommunal discord.[12] Such incidents often bore striking resemblance to conflicts and misunderstandings in earlier times, and more recent ones.

The study of modern Chinese Muslim history requires attention not only to incidental or intercommunal violence, but also to the more systemic violence of state-building. In fact, Muslims in the Republican era committed far more violence on behalf of the state than against it. The powerful northwestern Muslim warlords—descended from those who broke ranks with the nineteenth-century rebels to favor the Qing—all killed fellow Muslims to maintain their own rule

[10] Jonathan N. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), pp. 125-29.

[11] "Henan gushi bei feifen qingzhensi shisi chu [A Story of Fourteen Mosques in Henan Targeted by Arson]," *Yuehua* 2.18 (1931).

[12] Tian [pseudonym], "Wuru huijiao wenzi de laiyou [The Reasons for Publishing Characters Insulting to Islam]," *Yuehua* 2.2 (1930); "Beiping jiao'an shimo [The Case of the *Beiping Xinbao* Insulting Islam, from Start to Finish]," *Yuehua* 8.12 (1936), pp. 1-20; See also Gladney, *Muslim Chinese*, pp. 4-5; Rudolf Löwenthal, *The Religious Periodical Press in China* (Peking: The Synodal Commission in China, 1940), Ch. 7. Strikingly similar events occurred in India in the same period. See Julia Stephens, "The Politics of Muslim Rage: Secular Law and Religious Sentiments in Late-Colonial India," *History Workshop Journal* (Spring 2014): pp. 45-64.

and, after 1927, that of the Guomindang (GMD).[13] Muslim generals also played an important role in the GMD's campaigns against the Communists, and helped set the basic geopolitical conditions making possible the GMD's ambitious development plans in the Northwest. These Muslim military figures were the primary constituency supporting the urban eastern Chinese Muslim elites populating this study. Chinese Muslim initiatives of the 1920s and 1930s, which might otherwise appear purely intellectual, cultural, or "religious" in nature, always occurred against the backdrop of fraught relations with the Han, and tended to reflect the decisively pro-state orientation of the Muslim militarists. These relatively unshakable political conditions provided a major impetus for leading Chinese Muslims to explain Islam in a friendly and apologetic manner: hence, for example, senior Chinese imams' heavy emphasis, from around 1930, on the Prophetic Hadith "Patriotism is an article of faith" (Ar. *hubb al-watan min al-iman*), which they notably came to render in translation as a total equivalence rather than a subordination: "Love of country is love of the religion" (Ch. *aiguo aijiao*).[14]

A perhaps natural question is whether Muslims in China wished to form their own country. After all, the nineteenth century uprisings had raised the possibility, and in some cases the short-lived reality, in dramatic fashion.[15] Moreover, the first two decades of the twentieth century had seen the collapse of the Qing, Ottomans, and other multi-ethnic empires, and in their place, the increasingly globalized norm and expectation of national self-determination.[16] The

[13] Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, Chs. 4-5; Andrew D.W. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: A Political History of Republican Sinkiang, 1911-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986).

[14] Wang Jingzhai, "Jinshou huijiao yu aihu guojia [Preserving the Religion and Protecting the Nation]," *Yuehua* 2.3 (1930); Ma Lishen, "Aiguo yu aijiao [Love of Country and Love of the Religion]," *Yuehua* 2.3 (1930).

[15] In contrast to Xinjiang and Yunnan, Lipman maintains that the nineteenth-century Gansu uprisings remained localized and did not seek political independence. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, Ch. 4.

[16] See for example Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determinatino and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford UP, 2007).

notion that every group of people possessing certain common characteristics should occupy its own territorial state may explain, for example, why the assumption of Muslims' inability to assimilate into China continued to suffuse missionary writings. The same assumption lay behind the Japanese Empire's gamble in proposing a "Muslim Manchuria" in North China.[17] Other foreign observers such as Edgar Snow made the same assumption of Chinese Muslims in the 1930s.[18] Nevertheless, as far as I have seen in the available sources, none of the warlords or urban Chinese Muslim elites ever talked openly about independence. A sole Chinese Muslim scholar wrote in Arabic of Uyghurs and Chinese Muslims forming a single state across Xinjiang and the Northwest, but this is not what he said when writing in Chinese. On the other hand, indirect clues to the political anxieties of Chinese Muslims are abundant enough: in the 1920s, Chinese Muslim periodicals paid close attention to the fate of Muslims in large Muslim-minority societies such as India and the Soviet Union, as well as in the newly formed secular Turkish Republic (a model of nationalism and modernization Chiang Kai-shek happened to admire).[19] After the formation of the unified GMD state in 1927-28 and the institution of censorship in the mid-1930s, however, integrationist and "patriotic" themes became more pronounced in the Chinese Muslim press.

What follows is an attempt to understand, in the political context summarized above, the components and implications of Chinese Muslim elites' transnationalist integrationism: how Chinese Muslims' relationship with the Chinese (especially GMD) state, and their relationships

[17] Selçuk Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam: Transnational Nationalism and World Power, 1900-1945," *American Historical Review* 109/4 (October 2004): pp. 1140-70; Kelly Anne Hammond, "The Conundrum of Collaboration: Japanese Involvement with Muslims in North China, 1931-1945" (PhD dissertation, Georgetown University, 2015); Kelly A. Hammond, "Managing Muslims: Imperial Japan, Islamic Policy, and Axis Connections during the Second World War," *Journal of Global History* 12/2 (July 2017): pp. 251-73.

[18] Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China* (New York: Random House, 1938), Ch. 4.

[19] For example, *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan* [*Chinese Islamic Study Society Monthly*] (Shanghai: 1926-1929).

with Muslim networks outside China, shaped one another; how Chinese Muslims attempted to reassemble a profound sense of dislocation into a secure sense of belonging and authenticity; how Islamic modernism, decoupled from the project of Islamic political unity, nevertheless performed crucial political work in in a seemingly unlikely Chinese context; how nationalisms thus gained meaning primarily through transnational contacts, yet also how transnationalisms became increasingly seen as merely the sum of smaller national parts; how mobility came to serve immobilization. As already indicated, Chinese Muslims' rediscovery of the Islamic world, and the impact of that process on their self-identification in China, was not simply an instance of benign "cosmopolitanism," "translation," or intellectual or cultural "exchange" facilitated by modern communication technologies. It was, primarily, part of an ongoing struggle for survival.

In the first half of the twentieth century, and especially from the late 1920s to late 1940s, Chinese Muslim elites engaged extensively and intensively with transnational Islamic networks that tended to affirm Islam's borderlessness, but consciously offered up the fruits of that encounter to the bordered hegemonic project of GMD state- and nation-building, which included the top-down Sinicization of Islam and Muslims. Ultimately, Chinese Muslims' engagement with Islamic modernist thought and networks did not subvert but rather enabled the Guomindang government's domestic and foreign policies toward Islam and Muslims, and facilitated the nationalization of Muslim identity in modern China.

By Land and Sea: A Survey of Islam in China and Islam in Republican China

Chinese Muslims, now known as the *huizu*, or "Hui minority nationality," today number slightly over ten million and are distributed throughout every province and major city of the present-day territory of China, distinct from the Turkic Uyghurs as well as various smaller Muslim groups. They trace their descent to Arab and Persian merchants arriving in China primarily by sea

beginning in the eighth century, or to subsequent waves of Muslims arriving primarily overland from Central or West Asia in later centuries. The first six centuries of Islam's history in China, coinciding with the late Tang (618-907), Song (960-1279), and Yuan (1271-1368), were dominated by the multidirectional movement of people, goods, and knowledge by land and sea.[20] The transition from the vast Mongol Yuan to the more compact, Han-centric Ming (1368-1644), brought several developments that, in Zvi Ben-Dor Benite's words, made the "Muslims in China" into "Chinese Muslims."[21] This trend intensified with the introversion of Ming policy following the cancellation of the famous maritime voyages (1405-1430) of the Muslim admiral Zheng He.[22] Generations of intermarriage and localization transformed Muslims' physiognomy and ways of life; most forgot the languages of their ancestors outside contexts such as prayer or giving their children Arabic names in addition to Chinese ones. Muslims in the late Ming and Qing (1644-1912) responded creatively to prejudices and cultural pressures by crafting a canon of works eventually known as the Han Kitab ("Chinese Islamic canon"), which used Confucian

[20] On this extremely rich period, see Ralph Kauz, *Aspects of the Maritime Silk Road: From the Persian Gulf to the East China Sea* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010); Angela Schottenhammer, "Yang Liangyao's Mission of 785 to the Caliph of Baghdād: Evidence of an Early Sino-Arabic Power Alliance?" Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient 101 (2015): p. 177-241; Hyunhee Park, *Mapping the Chinese and Islamic Worlds: Cross-Cultural Exchange in Pre-Modern Asia* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2012); John Chaffee, "Diasporic Identities in the Historical Development of the Maritime Muslim Communities of Song-Yuan China," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 49/4 (2006): 395-420; Kuwabara Jitsuzo, "On P'u Shou-keng," *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 2 (1928): 1-79 and 7 (1935): 1-104; Thomas Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2001); Jackie Armijo-Hussein, "Sayyid 'Ajall Shams al-Din: A Muslim from Central Asia, Serving the Mongols in China, and Bringing 'Civilization' to Yunnan" (PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 1997); Morris Rossabi, "The Muslims in the Early Yuan Dynasty," in John Langlois, ed., *China under Mongol Rule* (Princeton UP, 1981), pp. 257-95.

[21] Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "'Follow the White Camel': Islam in China to 1800," *New Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 3 (New York: Cambridge UP, 2010), pp. 421; Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "The Marrano Emperor: The Mysterious Bond between Zhu Yuanzhang and the Chinese Muslims," in Sara Schneewind, ed. *Long Live the Emperor!: Uses of the Ming Founder across Six Centuries of East Asian History*. Ming studies research series 4 (2008): 275-308.

[22] Edward Dreyer, *Zheng He: China and the Oceans in the Early Ming Dynasty, 1405-1433* (Pearson Longman, 2007).

vocabulary to explain Islamic beliefs and practices in Chinese.[23] Matsumoto Masumi in particular has argued that this sophisticated literary tradition was not merely a philosophical exercise, but a deliberate attempt to present Islam to non-Muslim Chinese as innocuous, and "almost the same in ontology" as Confucianism, in order to mitigate misunderstandings and violence.[24] In spite of such efforts, the influx of Naqshbandi revivalist influences into northwestern China beginning in the eighteenth century sparked intra-communal fractiousness and eventually violent uprisings against the Manchu Qing, in turn suppressed by Zuo Zongtang on behalf of Beijing.[25] These developments heightened political and doctrinal differences between northwestern versus urban coastal Chinese Muslims, and cast a shadow over much of the twentieth century, when Chinese Muslims contended with Chinese nationalism, warlordism, a reinvigorated Han-centrism, war with Japan, civil war, and Chinese Communism.[26]

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[23] Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*; Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, Ch. 2; James D. Frankel, *Rectifying God's Name: Liu Zhi's Confucian Translation of Monotheism and Islamic Law* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011); Sachiko Murata, *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light: Wang Tai-Yu's Great Learning of the Pure and Real and Liu Chih's Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm, with a New Translation of Jami's Lawa'ih from the Persian by William C. Chittick* (New York: SUNY, 2000); Sachiko Murata et al., *The Sage Learning of Liu Zhi: Islamic Thought in Confucian Terms* (Harvard, 2009).

[24] Masumi Matsumoto, "Secularisation and Modernisation of Islam in China: Educational Reform, Japanese Occupation, and the Disappearance of Persian Learning," in Jonathan Lipman, ed., *Islamic Thought in China: Sino-Muslim Intellectual Evolution from the 17th to the 21st Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), pp. 171-96.

[25] Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, Chs. 3-4; Joseph Fletcher, "The Naqshbandiyya in Northwest China, edited by Jonathan N. Lipman," in *Studies on Chinese and Islamic Inner Asia*, edited by Beatrice Forbes Manz (Aldershot: Variorum, 1995), pp. 3-20. While uprisings in Gansu remained relatively localized, large portions of Turkistan and Yunnan actually broke away from the Qing to form independent Muslim states during this same period. See Atwill, David. *The Chinese Sultanate: Islam, Ethnicity, and the Panthay Rebellion in Southwest China, 1856-1873*. Stanford, 2005; Hodong Kim, *Holy War in China: The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia, 1864-1877* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2004).

[26] On nationalism and the state, see John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996); on Han-centrism, see Frank Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1992). Since the end of the Cultural Revolution, Chinese Muslims have regained some means to connect with Muslims outside China, but only under the watchful eyes of the state. See for example Mohammed Turki al-Sudairi, "Adhering to the Ways of Our Western Brothers: Tracing Saudi Influences on the Development of Hui Salafism in China," *Sociology of Islam* 4 (2016): pp. 27-58.

China's Republican era (1911-1949) was a key moment of transition when Chinese Muslims enjoyed unprecedented opportunities to (re)connect with the Islamic world after centuries of isolation, but simultaneously felt pressure to demonstrate loyalty to the new Chinese nation-state.[27] On the one hand, they sought to improve their knowledge of Islam as a whole, and they increasingly associated this task with Arabic texts and mastery of the Arabic language. New transport and communication technologies allowed Chinese Muslims to undertake pilgrimage and study in the Middle East and elsewhere, beginning with the journey of Ma Dexin of Yunnan in the mid-nineteenth century, developing further with the journeys of several leading imams to the Islamic world from 1905 to the early 1930s, and culminating in the dispatching of six delegations of aspiring Chinese *ulama* to study at al-Azhar in Cairo from 1931 to 1947.[28]

On the other hand, the GMD's struggle to consolidate power throughout the former Qing dominions compelled Chinese Muslims to cooperate with the state in a manner that directly shaped their modern collective identity. During the Nanjing Decade (1927-37) and the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45), Chinese Muslims perceived that their community's best chance to survive and thrive was to ally with the GMD (and, notably, with its conservative-nationalist wing rather than its liberal-internationalist one). China's territorial crisis, perhaps even more than the war with Japan or the ongoing struggle between the GMD and the Communists, lay at the heart of this calculus. Chinese Muslims consistently sought to demonstrate that they were unlike the Manchus, Mongols, Uyghurs, or Tibetans, all of whose territories broke away from China, were

[27] Masumi Matsumoto provides a helpful summary of this period in "The Completion of the Idea of Dual Loyalty towards China and Islam," *Études Orientales* 21/22 (2004).

[28] Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "Taking 'Abduh to China: Chinese-Egyptian Intellectual Contact in the Early Twentieth Century," in James L. Gelvin and Nile Green, eds., *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), pp. 249-68; "'Nine Years in Egypt': The Chinese at al-Azhar University," *HAGAR Studies in Culture, Polity, and Identities* 8/1 (2008): 105-28; Kristian Petersen, "The Multiple Meanings of Pilgrimage in Sino-Islamic Thought," in Lipman, *Islamic Thought in China*, pp. 81-106.

conquered by outside powers, or maintained de facto independence during the first half of the twentieth century. Loyalty to and cooperation with the central Nanjing government served the interests of the Muslim warlords—virtually unconquerable in their own northwest frontier provinces of Gansu, Ningxia, and Qinghai, but not strong enough to form their own polity. As Lipman observes, "It is ironic…that the time of China's most thorough disintegration in recent centuries, the warlord period, should have been the period of Gansu's *incorporation* into the Han-dominated political system of China proper, but that is precisely what happened."[29]

As fluid as the situation was at this time for Chinese Muslims in China, so too was the situation they encountered across the Islamic world. The many disruptions wrought by colonialism produced responses in Islamic societies not unlike those in China: an emphasis on education reform, self-strengthening, and increasingly, national independence. China's burgeoning print media industry had already given Chinese Muslims, and Chinese generally, an awareness of these simultaneities and sometimes even a sense of identification with the plight of other "non-Western" peoples.[30] Of special relevance for Chinese Muslims, however, was the reform of Islam itself. From the 1880s to the 1930s, figures such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad ʻAbduh, Rashid Rida, and their disciples and counterparts across the Middle East, Asia, and Africa, espoused a complex set of positions in which they argued, against Orientalists and other detractors, that Islam was fully compatible with various aspects of "modernity." Importantly, this set of positions often involved rejecting Sufism as a body of irrational, superstitious, or traditionalist accretions obscuring the true, rational essence of the original Islam.

[29] Jonathan N. Lipman, "Ethnicity and Politics in Republican China: The Ma Family Warlords of Gansu," *Modern China* 10/3 (July 1984): 288; see also Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, Ch. 5.

[30] On the bases of this identification, see Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Durham: Duke UP, 2002); Xiaobing Tang, *Global Space and the Nationalist Discourse of Modernity: The Historical Thinking of Liang Qichao* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996).

Chinese Muslims largely abstracted Islamic modernism, as a body of texts, questions, and priorities, from its Middle Eastern, South Asian, and Southeast Asian contexts, and translated and applied it selectively to their situation in China. At the same time, their travels in the Islamic world compelled them to confront life, politics, and linguistic and cultural difference in ways they may not have expected upon departing from China.

Authority without Power: The "Eliteness" of Republican-Era Chinese Muslim Elites

At the helm of both processes I am describing—transnationalism and integrationism—stood a network of elite Chinese Muslims hailing primarily from the eastern urban centers of Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Nanjing, and Guangzhou. Backed by the Ma warlords, and descended intellectually (and in some cases biologically) from the Han Kitab generation of Islamo-Confucian scholars, this group of *ulama*, government officials, diplomats, merchants, academics, and communal leaders were consummate middlemen. They traveled to Southeast Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East in search of texts and authoritative, authentic voices on Islam. At the same time, they were personal acquaintances of Chiang Kai-shek (i.e. Jiang Jieshi, 1887-1975), Chen Lifu (1900-2001), and other top officials, and actively supported the GMD's frontier nation-building. The various constituents within the larger network of Chinese Muslim elites did not always agree with one another: important differences emerged at various points, in particular, between the political and military leaders versus the religious leaders. What they did almost always agree on, however, was the overriding ethos of transnationalist integrationism: connecting with Islam and Muslims outside China was to serve the improvement of Muslims' conditions and status in China, and nothing else. The publications and institutions established by this group of urban coastal Chinese Muslims anchored their collaboration and reinforced this ideological orientation.

By extension, the other point the Chinese Muslim elites agreed on was their own relatively narrow group's aspiration to speak on behalf of all the disparate communities of Muslims of China, including not only the "Hui" scattered through all China's regions, but to an extent also the Uyghurs as well as the smaller Muslim groups (who would not be identified as separate ethnicities until the 1950s). One of the most important byproducts of transnationalist integrationism was a powerful and versatile narrative of Islam and Muslims' (positive) historical role in China and many "contributions" to Chinese civilization, and now, to the Chinese nation-state.[31] The list of those contributions included a flourishing maritime trade, transmission of medical materials and knowledge, the conquest and incorporation of Yunnan, improvements in astronomy, the rectification of the calendar, and the maritime voyages of the Yunnanese Muslim admiral Zheng He. It is not a coincidence that these and other episodes have come to be seen as the most important moments in the history of Islam in China (I am not contesting whether they occurred, but arguing that their latter-day renarrations have been deeply political, and as such are crucial to understanding Islam in China in the twentieth century). In articulating such narratives, elite Chinese Muslims displayed a tremendous capacity to anticipate how the Chinese state and society would view their community, and act accordingly yet still "authentically."[32] Once again,

[31] In this regard, the Republican-era Chinese Muslim elites resembled their counterparts in other generations, particularly the Han Kitab authors whose similarly subtle skills of self-narrative are detailed in Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*. The main difference is that, in the Republican era, opportunities to connect directly with the Islamic world outside China were much greater, but so too were pressures to state clearly one's loyalty to "China."

Due to the influence Republican-era Chinese Muslim elites' narrative continue to exert even over current scholarship on Chinese Islam, selectively taking the Chinese Muslim elites at their word cannot mean taking their word as the definitive "truth" for all Chinese Muslims. Rather, I view the narratives articulated by Chinese Muslim elites not as expressions of empirical "identity," but as processes of discursive "self-identification." Frederick Cooper and Rogers Brubaker, "Identity," in Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), p. 71.

[32] In contrast to other non-Han groups who were defined as ethnicities by the PRC in the 1950s, Chinese Muslims developed an argument that their community represented an ethnicity in the 1940s, well before the PRC had even come into existence. On ethnicization generally, see Tom Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). On Chinese Muslim self-ethnicization, see Wlodzimierz Cieciura, "Ethnicity or Religion? Republican-Era Chinese Debates on Islam and

I give considerable attention to these narratives not as an empirical description of who the Chinese Muslims were or are, but in order to illuminate the historical conditions that made them describe that community in that particular way.

The term "elites" requires qualification. Here, it does not primarily signify pure wealth or socioeconomic status, even though certain Chinese Muslim leaders did amass considerable wealth and used that wealth to further the agendas and initiatives described in this study.[33] Rather, the term refers primarily to the intangible factors behind those agendas and initiatives: shared backgrounds, values, assumptions, discourses, and vocabularies. This often unspoken political common ground meant that the Republican-era Chinese Muslim elites resembled both earlier generations of Chinese Muslim political, religious, and intellectual leaders (again, particularly the Han Kitab authors), as well as the Confucian ideal of the literati (a status to which the Han Kitab authors claimed to belong).[34] Furthermore, in their relations with the GMD state, the Republican-era Chinese Muslim elites also bore resemblance to Buddhist elites of the

Muslims," in Lipman, *Islamic Thought in China*, 107-46. See also Dru C. Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1991).

[33] In other words, Eurocentric or U.S.-centric definitions do not fully apply. The classic study Charles W. Mill, *The Power Elite* (1956) certainly identifies many forms of eliteness, but the overall assumption is that these are rooted in wealth. Gramsci's notion of a "historical bloc" exerting "cultural hegemony" comes closer, but it characterizes the elites as a fixed sociological group determined by material factors, even if history is one of those factors.

[34] Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*; Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "From Literati to 'Ulama': The Origins of Chinese Muslim Nationalist Historiography," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 9/4 (2004): p. 88. On aspects of literati culture generally see also Benjamin Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California, 1986); Benjamin Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Susan Mann, *The Talented Women of the Zhang Family* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); William T. Rowe, *Saving the World: Chen Hongmou and Elite Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century China* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2001). On the culture of elite intellectuals in the Republican era, in some ways similar to the imperial literati despite their new-style educational institutions (and rejection of Confucianism, doubting of antiquity, and so on), see Wen-Hsin Yeh, *The Alienated Academy: Culture and Politics in Republican China, 1919-1937* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1990).

same period, though I would argue that their real and perceived status was generally higher: in particular, there is no equivalent to the Ma warlords among China's other minority groups.[35]

On the other hand, the Republican-era Chinese Muslim elites may not have differed all that greatly from Muslim elites of other places or periods. The *ulama*, of course, were *ulama*. Beyond them, the political, military, and communal leaders also paralleled certain social groups in both premodern and modern Muslim societies. They certainly live up to the classical notion of "those who loose and bind" (*ahl al-hall wa-l-rabt*). In the case of the military figures, there is also a strong echo of the notion of the Muslim "warrior-poet": many of the Ma warlords were known to be well-versed in both the Islamic and Confucian classics, and to have cultivated skills in calligraphy.[36] Perhaps the closest "Islamic" parallel to the Chinese Muslim political leaders, however, is Albert Hourani's study of the Ottoman "politics of notables." Hourani argued that Ottoman-era *ulama,* janissaries, and communal leaders were crucial intermediaries who helped stabilize the authority of the central government in the provinces, but who also remained partly to largely autonomous from that government, and could put selective pressure on it. Theirs was a politics of families and local institutions more than of bureaucrats. In the nineteenth century, this otherwise durable system was weakened by centralizing reforms of the Ottoman *Tanzimat* and Muhammad Ali in Egypt, as well as by European imperialism.[37] Substituting the proper nouns, this would be an entirely apt characterization of the Chinese Muslim elites in the Republican era.

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[35] On Republican-era Buddhist leaders, their discourses, and their relations to the state, see Gray Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China* (New York: Columbia UP, 2005) and Jan Kiely and J. Brooks Jessup, eds., *Recovering Buddhism in Modern China* (New York: Columbia UP, 2016).

[36] For an exploration of the "warrior-poet" ideal in classical Islam, see Paul Cobb, *Usama bin Munqidh: Warrior-Poet of the Age of Crusades* (New York: OneWorld, 2005); see also Michael Gilsenan, *Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Arab World* (New York: Pantheon, 1982), Ch. 2: "The Men of Learning and Authority."

[37] Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables," in Albert Hourani, Philip Khoury, and Mary C. Wilson, eds., *The Modern Middle East: A Reader* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005).

Chinese Muslim elite status also involved specific images of masculinity. After all, almost all the figures in this study are male. Much more than bravery, chivalry, or physical strength, their conception of male eliteness emphasized qualities of social and intellectual authority and articulateness that drew upon both "Islamic" and "Chinese" models. They strove to embody cultivation (Ch. *xiu*; Ar. *taraqqi*), literary gentility (Ch. *wen*; Ar. *adab*), culture (Ch. *wenhua*; Ar. *thaqafa*), and so on. They were well-educated, well-spoken, and well-connected. When abroad, they saw themselves as the social and intellectual peers of the Hadrami merchants of Singapore, the Arab intellectuals of Cairo, and the sheikhs of al-Azhar—even while being the first to admit that they were less knowledgeable in the Arabic language or Islamic doctrine.

Above all, elite status for the Republican-era Chinese Muslims rested less upon material power for its own sake, or even upon mastery of Islam, and more upon learning to be reliable guardians—whether communicating in Chinese, Arabic, or another language—of a certain narrative of Islam's place in China and the world, as dictated by the ethos of transnationalist integrationism.

Islam in China as Chinese, Islamic, and Global History

The earliest academic studies of the history of Islam in China were undertaken by Orientalists and Christian missionaries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While rich in detail, such works were of course inescapably problematic due to what Edward Said would call the authors' "final disapproval" of their object of study, and often enough, their fear that Islam would spread further in China at the expense of Christianity and the European empires.[38]

[38] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979), p. 224. See Marshall Broomhall, *Islam in China: A Neglected Problem* (London: Morgan and Scott, 1910); Rev. Claude L. Pickens, Jr. Collection on Muslims in China (Harvard-Yenching Library); Isaac Mason Collection (New York Public Library). See also the many relevant articles published in *Moslem World*, 1911-1950s, by Samuel Zwemer, Pickens, Broomhall, Mason, and others.

Not long thereafter, in conversation with such missionaries and Orientalists, Chinese Muslims began writing their own academic histories of Islam in China, often in a manner that—as was the case elsewhere in the Islamic world—reproduced and internalized Orientalist assumptions even while resisting their arguments.[39] One important assumption, filtered through Islamic modernist thinkers, was that Islam and China were distinct "civilizations" that had undergone periods of "golden age" and "decline" and had interacted in certain ways at certain points. Another was that Islamic civilization was centered on Arabia, while Chinese civilization revolved around an imperial Confucian cosmology. The Republican era thus intertwines the history of Chinese Islam with its historiography in a way that other periods do not.

Some missionary and early academic studies of Islam in China expressed skepticism toward Islam's basic capacity to exist, or to remain fully "Islamic," in a Chinese environment, assuming that the supposed cosmic-civilizational monoliths of Islam and (Confucian) China were fundamentally contradictory.[40] Since then, most scholars have highlighted the opposite: the remarkable ways in which Islamic identity has been reconciled, syncretized, or synthesized with Chineseness, particularly through translation projects such as the Han Kitab in pre-modern times, or through processes of ethnogenesis (partly elective, partly state-imposed) in modern times.[41]

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[39] Bai Shouyi's numerous works, all in Chinese, are the most important. From the 1930s and 1940s, there is also: Muhammad Makin al-Sini [Ma Jian], *Nazra jami'a ila tarikh al-islam fi-l-sin wa ahwal al-muslimin fiha* [*Comprehensive Overview of the History of Islam in China and the Conditions of Muslims Therein*] (Cairo: al-Matba'a al-Salafiyya, 1935); Fu Tongxian, *Zhongguo huijiao shi* [*A History of Chinese Islam*] (1940); Muhammad Tawadu', *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*; Badr al-Din al-Sini [Hai Weiliang], *al-'Alaqat bayn al-'Arab wa-l-Sin* [*Relations between the Arabs and China*] (Cairo: 1950).

[40] Marshall Broomhall's *Islam in China: A Neglected Problem* could be said to fit this description. See also Raphael Israeli, "Muslims in China: The Incompatibility between Islam and the Chinese Order," *T'oung Pao*, Second Series, 63/4-5 (1977): pp. 296-323. Notably, Israeli quotes numerous missionary and Orientalist sources in this article, but no Chinese Muslim ones.

[41] Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*; Sachiko Murata, *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light: Wang Tai-Yu's Great Learning of the Pure and Real and Liu Chih's Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm, with a New Translation of Jami's Lawa'ih from the Persian by William C. Chittick* (New York: SUNY Press, 2000); Sachiko Murata et al., *The Sage*

Scholarship on the Han Kitab has established that "reconciliation" is an effective framework for understanding Islam in late imperial (Ming-Qing) China. The unprecedented intensity of both Islamic transnationalism and Chinese nationalism as of the early twentieth century, however, requires a modified framework. The Republican era was one of the most dramatic transitional periods in Chinese Islamic history, but also one of the least thoroughly understood. Some scholars have characterized it as a period of "Arabization," in which Chinese Muslims (re)forged contact with the Middle East and abandoned previously dominant Persian, Turkic, and to an extent even Chinese Han Kitab works in favor of Arabic ones in their madrasa curricula.[42] At the same time, others have pointed to the undeniable trends of nationalization and the proto-ethnicization of Chinese Islamic identity in this same period.[43] Meanwhile, few have systematically addressed how modern Chinese Islam was an example of Islamic modernist thought or modern thought in general.[44] How could it be that Chinese Islam was taking on more "Arabic" features and more "Chinese" features at the same time, while also becoming "modern"?

Arabization and nationalization were not unrelated, nor were they contradictory. They were two sides of the same coin of transnationalist integrationism. Moreover, the epistemological

Learning of Liu Zhi: Islamic Thought in Confucian Terms (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2009); Frankel, *Rectifying God's Name*; Gladney, *Muslim Chinese*.

[42] Maris Boyd Gillette, *Between Mecca and Beijing: Modernization and Consumption among Urban Chinese Muslims* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000); Ben-Dor Benite, "Nine Years in Egypt"; Masumi Matsumoto, "Secularisation and Modernisation of Islam in China: Educational Reform, Japanese Occupation, and the Disappearance of Persian Learning," in Lipman, *Islamic Thought*, pp. 171-96.

[43] Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, Ch. 6; Yufeng Mao, "A Muslim Vision for the Chinese Nation: Chinese Pilgrimage Missions to Mecca during World War II," *Journal of Asian Studies* 70/2 (May 2011): 373-95; Mao, "Muslim Educational Reform"; Cieciura, "Ethnicity or Religion?"

[44] The three primary exceptions are Benite, "Taking 'Abduh to China," and Zeyneb Hale Eroglu Sager, "Islam in Translation: Muslim Reform and Transnational Networks in Modern China, 1908-1957" (PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 2016); Yufeng Mao, "Sino-Muslims in Chinese Nation-Building, 1906-1956" (PhD dissertation, The George Washington University, 2007).

foundations on which they rested were common to the experience of "modernity" in China, in the Islamic world, and in general. As Talal Asad has argued for Islamic (and Christian) contexts, a defining feature of modernity is that human mobility is not the opposite of immobility, hierarchy, or power, but is constituted by them, and informs them in return. Consider Asad's commentary on an aspect of Hannah Arendt's *Origins of Totalitarianism*:

> [Arendt is] aware of a problem that has escaped the serious attention of those who would have us celebrate human agency and the decentered subject: the problem of understanding how dominant power realizes itself through the very discourse of mobility. For Arendt is very clear that mobility is not merely an event in itself, but a moment in the subsumption of one act by another. If people are physically and morally uprooted, they are more easily moved, and when they are easy to move, they are more easily rendered physically *and* morally superfluous. From the point of view of power, mobility is a convenient feature of the act subsumed, but a necessary one of the subsuming act. For it is by means of geographical and psychological movement that modern power inserts itself into preexisting structures.[45]

In other words, modernity construes "religion" in such a way that physical or ideological movements associated with religion automatically carry with them the potential for complicity in various hegemonizing projects, even as religion itself continues to be deemed apolitical. Rebecca Nedostup, as well as Vincent Goossaert and David Palmer, have applied Asad's arguments to modern Chinese history, particularly with respect to the conceptual distinction between rational "religion" (*zongjiao*) and irrational "superstition" (*mixin*)—whose emergence enabled the GMD government's practice of destroying certain temples and marginalizing certain groups while

[45] Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, pp. 10-11; Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Benediction Classics, 2009), p. 475. The original passage does not mention mobility explicitly, but implies the negative understanding of it discussed by Asad: "[U]prootedness and superfluousness…have been the curse of modern masses since the beginning of the industrial revolution and have become acute with the rise of imperialism at the end of the last century and the break-down of political institutions and social traditions in our own time. To be uprooted means to have no place in the world, recognized and guaranteed by others; to be superfluous means not to belong to the world at all."

folding approved religious organizations into the structures of the state.[46] An equivalent distinction circulated at the same time among Islamic modernists, who cast Sufism, traditional education, and other discursive adversaries as clinging to "superstitions" (*khurafat*).[47] As will become clear, modern Chinese Muslim transnationalist integrationism drew upon this discursive development in both its Chinese and its Islamic contexts.

Saba Mahmood adds to this equation by arguing that secular nation-states, by virtue of their intolerance of alternatives, and by way of their reconfigurations of historical and literary thought, tend to exacerbate rather than neutralize inter-religious conflict. This is especially the case when religion coincides with minority status. Focusing on modern Egypt, but with broadly applicable conclusions, she finds that "the regulation of religion under secularism has not simply tamed its power but also transformed it, making it more, rather than less, important to the identity of majority and minority populations. This process has resulted in the intensification of interreligious inequality and conflict, the valuation of certain aspects of religious life over others, and the increasingly precarious position of religious minorities in the polity."[48]

The experience of modern Chinese Muslims highlights the ways in which physical mobility can be pressed into the service of state power, particularly for a "religious minority." To borrow from Asad and Arendt, modern Chinese Muslims' transnationalist integrationism involved a "subsumed act"—connecting textually and personally with Muslims outside China—

[46] Rebecca Nedostup, *Superstitious Regimes: Religion and the Politics of Chinese Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard East Asia Monographs, 2009). See also Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

[47] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2003), pp. 35, 253-54. Examples of this tendency among Muslim thinkers can be found in Rashid Rida's *al-Manar*, among other places.

[48] Saba Mahmood, *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2016), pp. 14-15.

and a "subsuming act"—the ways in which those new mobilities came to support the GMD's assimilationist policies toward Muslims living in China's Northwest, part of the larger project of GMD state- and nation-building. To borrow from Mahmood, this intertwining of mobility and hegemony contributed (decisively, I would argue) to the consolidation of Chinese Muslim identity as a "religious minority" within the secular modern Chinese nation-state, distinct from other minority groups and from the Han, but by no means enjoying political or cultural security.

Understood in these terms, the only way to comprehend the features and consequences of transnationalist integrationism is to make the study of Islam and Muslims in modern China more fully "Chinese," "Islamic," and "global." By contrast, if Chinese Muslims are treated as having been an isolated or unique group, or merely an "ethnic group" in waiting, the full picture will not materialize. What, then, are the implications of Chinese, Islamic, and global historiography, as they currently stand, for the study of modern Chinese Muslim transnationalist integrationism? And what adjustments might such a study require from those fields?

First, with respect to China, the "New Qing History" has drawn much greater attention to China's non-Han peoples, including Chinese Muslims.[49] The frameworks that the New Qing applies to the Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, and Uyghurs also apply to an extent to the Chinese Muslims, who were largely (though not entirely) cut off from the Islamic world during the Qing (1644-1911), and therefore articulated their identities to a large extent in dialogue with the Qing state and its Beijing-centered imperial cosmology. At the same time, however, by inviting the assumption that the "Hui" as a group are more or less analogous to the Manchus, Mongols,

[49] See especially: Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Mark C. Elliott, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2001); Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge: Belknap, 2005).

Tibetans, and Uyghurs—potentially, in the Qing as well as in other periods—the New Qing paradigm obscures certain unique features of their history. Islam, after all, is vast, and in the long term has not been inherently co-articulated as a whole with the Chinese world to nearly the same extent as Manchuness, Mongolness, or Tibetanness (even though those identities also extend well beyond "China"). Therefore, to whatever extent the Chinese Muslims were or imagined themselves to be in dialogue with "Islam" as a whole, that would automatically make them different from those other groups (except the Uyghurs, in certain cases). The other issue that differentiates the Chinese Muslims from all other groups, including the Uyghurs, is their use of Arabic (and often Persian or Turkish as well, before the twentieth century). The New Qing's fundamental insight has been that sources in non-Chinese languages (Manchu, Mongolian, Tibetan, etc.) can illuminate Chinese history in new ways. Yet in spite of this emphasis, the overall significance of the Arabic language to Chinese Muslims (be it in the twentieth century, the Qing, or earlier) is a question that has mostly not been asked—perhaps partly because, unlike with the Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, and Uyghurs, Arabic for the Chinese Muslims is not a "native" language, and does not coincide cleanly with "ethnicity" or territory. The utility of viewing Chinese Muslims as simply one of many "Chinese minority groups" erodes further when we reach the Republican era, at which point they began grappling with the question of their relationship to Islam (again, *as a whole*) in new ways—a dynamic with no direct equivalent among the Manchus or Mongols, or, I would argue, even among the Tibetans or the Uyghurs.[50]

[50] Tibetan Buddhism was mostly contained to the Himalayan region, while Uyghurs' interaction with the Islamic world generally ran overland to Anatolia or southward to India and from there to Mecca. By contrast, Chinese Muslims in the twentieth century were active on the entire maritime network that included Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore, Ceylon, Bombay, Mecca, Cairo, and Istanbul.

The history of Islam in modern China must confront a central tension of Chinese history and historiography (and politics) as a whole: that it is problematic to equate China only with the Han, but it is equally problematic to assert that all groups living in the present-day territory of the PRC belong exclusively to Chinese history.[51] The old "Sinicization" paradigm addressed this tension by arguing that non-Han groups throughout Chinese history were gradually transformed by Chinese norms, whereas the New Qing History advocated moving beyond the Han to see China as a composite of multiple group histories. Chinese Islam does not quite fit either model: modern Chinese Muslim leaders tirelessly asserted their community's distinctiveness, but in the same breath posited a special relationship between themselves and the Han. As was the case elsewhere in the world, articulations of minority identity tended to inform those of majority identity.[52] Therefore, questions of Han identity and Sinicization cannot simply be discarded when considering modern Chinese Muslim history, but at the same time, they must be radically redefined (historicized). Notions of the Han as a dominant social group, as the embodiment of quintessentially "Chinese" traditions, and as the foremost bearers of Sun Yat-sen's (1866-1925) revolution loomed large for Chinese Muslims in the twentieth century. Conceptions of modern Chinese Muslim identity were articulated in large part alongside and in contradistinction to these notions. For example, Chiang Kai-shek, and some Chinese Muslim leaders, went so far as to say

[51] John King Fairbank spoke of this tension, awkwardly yet stubbornly affirming the frontiers' status as part of the Chinese "world order," and failed to account for the specificities of Chinese Muslim history: "The basic fault underlying this Sinocentric world order was the fact that it was not coterminous with the Chinese culture area. The non-Chinese states of that area, forming the Sinic Zone, were *umbilically tied to China* by cultural bonds such as the Chinese written language and Confucianism, but the Inner Asian Zone was composed of peoples of distinctly non-Chinese culture. Manchus, Mongols, Uighur Turks, Tibetans, and others *had to be included*, even though their societies and cultures were *basically very different* from those of China." John K. Fairbank, "A Preliminary Framework," in John K. Fairbank, ed., *The Chinese World Order* (Harvard, 1968), p. 3. Emphasis added.

[52] This point has been made with respect to China/Islam in China (and several other examples) in Dru C. Gladney, *Making Majorities: Constituting the Nation in Japan, Korea, China, Malaysia, Fiji, Turkey, and the United States* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998).

that Chinese Muslims were merely "Han who believed in Islam." The Chinese Muslim elites also asserted that of all China's peoples, their community was the most loyal to the Han and their revolution, and had the longest and most positive record of cooperation and cultural exchange with the majority. They also, again, acted as agents of the GMD government's Sinicization policies toward frontier Muslims. At the other end of the spectrum, meanwhile, Islamophobia, misunderstandings, and violence frequently tainted Han-Muslim relations throughout the late Qing and Republican eras: but the hope of mitigating these problems was part of the reason why the Chinese Muslim elites said what they said and did what they did.

In light of the special relationship (real and imagined) between the Chinese Muslim elites and the Han-dominated GMD government, this study also illuminates new aspects of republican governance and religion-state relations in modern China. The question of how to govern China's multi-ethnic and multi-religious frontiers represented perhaps the most important continuity from older imperial visions of "China as the world" to newer national visions of "China in the world."[53] I argue that the GMD's "revolutionary conservative" vision did not only consist of mass mobilization campaigns directed at the coastal cities, but also included a specific set of prescriptions for the Sinicization of China's non-Han frontier peoples. By the mid- to late 1930s, and especially after the Chinese Muslim elites retreated with the GMD government to the wartime capital Chongqing, the GMD in fact developed an increasingly specific (if highly circumscribed and instrumentalized) understanding of Islam.[54] I therefore build on recent

[53] On this transition, see Crossley, *Translucent Mirror*, pp. 36-52; Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Duke, 2002); Peter Zarrow, *After Empire: The Conceptual Transformation of the Chinese State, 1885-1924* (Stanford, 2012), Ch. 3; Rebecca E. Karl and Peter Zarrow, eds., *Rethinking the 1898 Reform Period: Political and Cultural Change in Late Qing China* (Harvard, 2002).

[54] The term "revolutionary conservatism" appears in Brian Kai Hin Tsui, "China's Forgotten Revolution: Radical Conservatism in Action, 1927-1949" (PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 2013), esp. Ch. 1.

A paradigmatic view of the Guomindang government as an incomplete or weak state can be found in Philip A. Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2002), pp. 109-10, 132.

scholarship showing that the GMD, in contrast to conventional characterizations, was neither an exclusively "secular" state nor a mere "weak state," but rather is better thought of as both highly ideological and highly malleable—and indeed, in keeping with Saba Mahmood's arguments, that its secular nationalism constructed and co-opted particular forms of "religion" and "minority" status.[55] The GMD was not simply consumed with destroying the Communists or with scraping by on tight budgets. Rather, the matrix of Republican China's secular nationalism, acute territorial crises, and minority histories, though conditioned by the struggle with the CCP, should to an extent be understood separately from that more familiar narrative. The GMD's determination to retain control of the vast frontier territories it had inherited from the Qing required it to articulate a vision of Chinese nationalism that included non-Han peoples and lands, yet attempted to pave a way for their assimilation. The GMD's answer to this problem contrasted with that of the CCP, but they would have had to come up with *some* answer even if the CCP had never existed, for the entire legitimacy of their leadership of China was at stake. Through organs such as the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission, GMD officials from Chiang Kai-shek down relied on input from non-Han peoples' elite representatives—especially Chinese Muslims—to make up the difference between the state's limited capacity and initial ignorance of frontier conditions, on the one hand, and its ambitious goals on the other. Also at stake was the balance of power within the GMD itself: the evidence overwhelmingly suggests that it was the conservative nationalist wing of the GMD (Chiang Kai-shek, Chen Lifu, He Yingqin, etc.), and

[55] Nedostup, *Superstitious Regimes*; Goosaert and Palmer, *Religious Question*; Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen: Political Ceremonies and Symbols in China, 1911-1929* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000); Eugenia Lean, *Public Passions: The Trial of Shi Jianqiao and the Rise of Popular Sympathy in Republican China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*.

not the more liberal-internationalist wing of Wang Jingwei, that saw the most to be gained from cultivating a partnership with the Chinese Muslim elites.

Second, with respect to Islamic history, the story of Islam in modern China obviously helps challenge methodological Arabo-centrism.[56] Beyond this, however, it seeks to historicize Arabo-centrism, asking how and why an emphasis on the Arabic language, Arab authenticity, and Muslim communities' "Arab origins" emerged in particular (modern) contexts, enabling new connections with the Middle East and other regions, as well as new formulations of history and identity.[57] Islam, however, is also much more than a set of spatial relations, or even a historically evolving manner of conceptualizing those spatial relations. In addition to Talal Asad, then, what conceptualizations of modern Islam generally can cast Islam in modern China in a new light?

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[56] On this point, we have Clifford Geertz's early attempt to understand Islam from the peripheries, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), as well as Marshall Hodgson's affirmation that "Such a difference as that, often noted, between Islam in a majority-Muslim environment (such as the Arab lands) and Islam in a minority-Muslim environment (such as India) is not…a matter of the degree to which Muslims are Muslims. It cannot be reduced to the difference between stale custom and enforced alertness, as an Indian Muslim might suggest; or between inbred mastery and latter-day imitation, as some Arab Muslims might feel. It will also be the difference between two equally genuine responses to the overall spiritual challenge carried in the Islamic dialogue in the midst of two different cultural environments." Marshall G.S. Hodgson, "General Prologue: The Islamic Vision in Religion and Civilization," in Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization: Volume I: The Classical Age of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. 85.

A more recent foundational work adopting a similar perspective is Richard W. Bulliet, *Islam: The View from the Edge* (New York: Columbia UP, 1994). Other examples outside the field of Chinese Islam include: Muzaffar Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam: India, 1200-1800* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries, 1400-1800* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2007); Richard M. Eaton, *Essays on Islam and Indian History* (New Delhi: Oxford UP, 2000); Barbard D. Metcalf, *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan* (New Delhi: Oxford UP, 2004). Michael Laffan has critiqued Orientalists' and Area Studies scholars' mutual peripheralization of Islam and Southeast Asia in *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma Below the Winds* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), p. 9, an argument that could be applied equally to China. A related critique of the "Arabist bias" as regards Southeast Asian history can be found in R. Michael Feener, "Introduction: Issues and Ideologies in the Study of Regional Muslim Cultures," in R. Michael Feener and Terenjit Sevea, eds., *Islamic Connections: Muslim Societies in South and Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009), pp. xiii-xxiii.

[57] Works that undertake a similar task are Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood*; Azyumardi Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern Ulama in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004); Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Michael Laffan, *The Makings of Indonesian Islam: Orientalism and the Narration of a Sufi Past* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2011); Manan Ahmed, *A Book of Conquest: The* Chachnama *and Muslim Origins in South Asia* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2016).

The late Shahab Ahmed's *What Is Islam?* provides a number of starting points for this question. As a whole, Ahmed reconceptualizes "human and historical Islam" as a "coherent contradiction" consisting of "Pre-Text, Text, and Con-Text," and thoroughly deconstructs notions that it was or is a "law," "civilization," "cultural system," "symbol system," "orthodoxy," or even "religion." Arriving at modern Islam, however, Ahmed argues as follows:

> My fundamental point…is that Muslims have, in making their modernity, moved decisively away from conceiving of and living normative Islam as hermeneutical engagement with Pre-Text, Text, and Con-Text of Revelation, and have, instead, begun conceiving of and living normative Islam primarily as hermeneutical engagement [only] with Text of Revelation. In Islamic modernity, the cosmo-Revelatory *continuum* of Pre-Text, Text, and Con-Text is effectively fractured, the role of Pre-Text as a direct source for meaning-making is considerably delegitimated and delimited, if not almost entirely eliminated, and the range and scope and variety of Con-Text that is available for mobilization in meaning-making is considerably depleted.[58]

Ahmed defines Pre-Text as the esoteric or the Unseen (corresponding to the Islamic concept of *al-batin*): the principles of truth and the nature of the universe that exist outside any human attempt at understanding them. The Con-Text, meanwhile, refers to the exoteric or the Seen (i.e. *al-zahir*), or all aspects of human experience and social life. One of the few topics that Ahmed does not address in detail, and one of the issues that matters most for Muslims in the modern world, is the question of minority status. Therefore, while the history of Islam and Muslims in modern China does conform to Ahmed's characterization of an increasingly exclusive emphasis on Text, I would argue that context (or Con-Text) still matters tremendously to modern Muslims to the extent that that context will by definition be informed by either a Muslim-majority or a Muslim-minority environment, with potentially widely varying implications for what Islam can mean. In twentieth-century China, Islam and Muslims stood the best chance of surviving if

[58] Ahmed, *What is Islam*, p. 515.

Chinese Muslims could articulate a vision of Islam asserting its benign and fruitful historical relationship with China, its peacefulness, its refraining from proselytizing, its lack of political aspirations, its patriotism and service to the nation, and above all its rationality (in other contexts, this assertion of political consonance coupled with the assertion of cultural distinctiveness has been aptly described as claiming a "right to difference").[59] Moreover, Chinese Muslims tended to assert that these qualities were synonymous with Islam or intrinsic to it, not merely contingent byproducts of it. By contrast, Muslims in Muslim-majority societies would certainly defend Islam against external Orientalists or Islamophobes, but would not be nearly so obliged to make such arguments to the government and society of the land in which they lived. For Muslims in Muslim-majority societies, Islam was simply Islam, whatever that might mean. Both Hodgson and Ahmed would of course remind us that this does not imply that Muslims in Muslim-majority countries are more Muslim. Yet their experiences can be starkly different.

An additional argument of Ahmed's nevertheless applies to both Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority societies, including Chinese Muslims. This is the useful distinction between Islam's "exploratory" versus "prescriptive" valences.[60] Echoing Asad's mobility-power

[59] Maurice Samuels, *The Right to Difference: French Universalism and the Jews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016). Consider p. 16: "The French Revolution granted the Jews full civil rights. But what did it ask of them in return? According to generations of historians, the answer is simple: assimilation, the disappearance of some or all of what made the Jews distinct as a people. When Count Stanislas de Clermont-Tonnerre famously declared to his fellow Revolutionaries, 'To the Jews as a nation, nothing; to the Jews as individuals, everything,' he seemed to describe a bargain by which Jews would surrender their traditional identity, defined by membership in a semiautonomous community, in order to be treated like every other citizen of France." In these terms, we might generalize that the GMD revolution offered Chinese Muslims a similar bargain as a group, and marginally less as individuals, to which Muslims responded by formulating the ethos and discourse of transnationalist integrationaism. The CCP revolution, meanwhile, offered Muslims more in theory but less in practice on both counts.

[60] Ahmed sees his emphasis on Islam's exploratory dimensions as an important corrective to Asad's characterization of Islam as a "discursive tradition" that is primarily prescriptive, i.e. concerned with the identification and institutionalization of "correctness," which in turn rests on an elaboration of notions of "authority." Ahmed, *What is Islam*, pp. 272-73; Talal Asad, *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1986), pp. 14-17.

dichotomy (and syncing rather neatly with the notion of transnationalist integrationism), Ahmed's distinction between Islam's exploratory and prescriptive qualities aptly characterizes the predicament of the modern Chinese Muslim elites. They sought "exploratorily" to connect with and learn about the Islamic world outside China, but at the same time saw the fruits of their exploration, particularly their increasing "prescriptive" emphasis on "correct belief," become tools of the GMD state's efforts to integrate and Sinicize frontier Muslims, which for some Chinese Muslim elites became a kind of prescription in itself.

Both "exploration" and "prescription" point, each in its own way, to the third level on which this history is constituted, that of the fully or properly "global." Ahmed's definition of Muslims' exploratory engagement with science, philosophy, music, poetry, and all knowledge of the human world as intrinsically part of their Islam is methodologically empowering. Chinese Muslims indeed saw quantum physics, John Dewey's pedagogical and psychological theories, Henri Bergson's quest to reconcile the "spiritual" and the "material," and biomedical theories of infectious disease as being just as relevant to their conceptualizations of Islam as more obviously germane transnational developments such as the writings of missionaries and Orientalists about Islam, the partition of British India (1947), or Indonesia's war of independence (1945-49). "Modernity," it would seem, when seen through Ahmed's own concept of exploration, does not only disrupt the Con-Text, but forms a new Con-Text for "meaning-making" in Islam.

At the same time, the Chinese Muslim elites' "prescriptive" practices were also global. Their search for the sources of "correct belief" increasingly came to form a component of the (also transnational and also prescriptive) project of GMD state- and nation-building. Chiang Kai-shek was known to have admired Turkey's modernizing reforms, which had marginalized Islam and rendered it innocuous to the status of the nation-state (a set of developments whose

significance the Chinese Muslims appear not to have fully appreciated at first). Meanwhile, GMD ideologues such as Chen Lifu saw U.S. practices of minority management, assimilation, and frontier development as directly relevant to China's own frontier governance.

Part of the challenge in determining the extent of Chinese Muslim agency in the modern world lies in Sebastian Conrad's distinction between global history as connections versus as integration.[61] It is possible to argue that the infrastructural and territorial incorporation of most of the world into European empires and a European-dominated global economy—particularly upon the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the laying of telegraph cables, the proliferation of steam routes, the institutionalization of standard time, and above all the universalization of the form of the nation-state itself—dramatically reduced the scope of human difference, even as perceptions and assertions of difference increased.[62] The overwhelming scale and disruptiveness of these developments, and the European power that they signify, has made it extremely difficult not to see non-European discourses of identity as anything other than "derivative," especially if the subjects in question are a minority lacking their own polity.[63]

Particularly for the period after the First World War, however, it is no longer entirely fitting to assume that large social or political processes, be they hegemonizing or emancipatory, simply emanated from "the West" and were subsequently imposed upon, appropriated by, or

[61] Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2016), pp. 1-16, 90-114.

[62] This perspective is expressed particularly in works such as C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914* (Malden: Blackwell, 2004); Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2014); Vanessa Ogle, *The Global Transformation of Time: 1870-1950* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2015); Charles S. Maier, *Once Within Borders: Territories of Power, Wealth, and Belonging since 1500* (Cambridge: Belknap, 2016).

[63] Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (London: Zed Books, 1986); Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993).

applied derivatively in the "non-West." It has finally become easy to argue that various Western claims to universalism must be re-particularized and re-historicized: "provincialized."[64] More difficult is to do away with "West" and "non-West" as descriptive categories altogether, and instead acknowledge the messiness of simultaneity: to appreciate how and why ostensibly Western universalisms were not simply applied but co-articulated or even primarily articulated by certain actors outside, in varying degrees of dialogue with, European and American counterparts. To do so is not to deny the violence of colonialism, capitalism, and European expansion, but to grasp more fully its consequences. The dynamic in which discourses of "modernity" were constructed simultaneously across varying geographies applies to disciplines of knowledge such as history, literature, the social sciences, and the natural sciences, as well as to practices of governance, state-building, development, and the management of populations and information. Even for discourses that did empirically originate in Europe, the fact of derivativeness was not the sole nor even the primary determinant of their subsequent trajectory. Context mattered decisively. The apple—even Newton's apple—might not fall far from the tree, but which way it then rolls, and how it is reshaped, depends entirely on the ground on which it lands. Ultimately, these observations apply even to the idea of "West and non-West" itself.[65]

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[64] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000).

[65] This line of argument draws especially on Marwa Elshakry, "When Science Became Western: Historiographical Reflections," *Isis* 101/1 (March 2010): pp. 98-109; Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic*; Eugenia Lean, "Proofreading Science: Editing and Experimentation in Manuals by a 1930s Industrialist," in *Science and Technology in Modern China, 1880s-1940s*, edited by Jing Tsu and Benjamin A. Elman (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Projit Bihari Mukharji, "Vishalyakarani as *Eupatorium ayapana*: Retro-Botanizing, Embedded Traditions, and Multiple Historicities of Plants in Colonial Bengal, 1890-1940," *Journal of Asian Studies* 73/1 (February 2014): pp. 65-87; Projit Bihari Mukharji, "Parachemistries: Colonial Chemopolitics in a Zone of Contest," *History of Science* 54/4 (2016), pp. 362-82; Projit Bihari Mukharji, "The Bengali Pharaoh: Upper-Caste Aryanism, Pan-Egyptianism, and the Contested History of Biometric Nationalism in Twentieht-Century Bengal," *Comparative Studies of History* 59/2 (2017): pp. 446-76.

In the terms of the preceding discussion, the history of Islamic modernism in China, the most important expression of elite Chinese Muslims' transnationalist integrationism, involved engaging exploratorily with discourses common to multiple Muslim societies in the early twentieth century, as well as those rooted in non-Muslim China and in the world at large, but that this mobility, partly by virtue of its prescriptive quest for "correct belief," soon became co-opted within the (also highly prescriptive and transnational) discourse and practice of power that was GMD state- and nation-building—with the result being that new conceptualizations of "religion" ultimately exacerbated the tensions inherent in belonging to the "Hui minority," despite also facilitating forms of collaboration between Chinese Muslim elites and the GMD government. In the process, Chinese Muslims participated—not derivatively but simultaneously, though still not as equals—in early twentieth-century constructions of "Islam," "China," and global "modernity."

Distinctions: Land versus Sea, Public versus Private Islam, Ethnos versus Ethos

Briefly, this study rests on three sets of assumptions that are worth making explicit. One concerns the distinction between maritime versus land-based patterns of Sino-Islamic exchange, another that between public versus private Islam, and a third between a methodological emphasis on ethnogenesis versus on the emergence of the political and intellectual constellations that eventually and contingently led Chinese Muslims to be imagined as the "Hui ethnic minority."

First, elite Chinese Muslim transnationalist integrationism bore a clear relationship to the unevenness and politicization of geographical space. Urban coastal Chinese Muslim elites had privileged access to the maritime networks connecting Shanghai to Hong Kong, Singapore, India, Jidda, and Cairo. This was the foremost material fact behind their dramatically expanded importation of Islamic texts and print media and of Islamic modernist thought more broadly (see Chapters One, Three, and Five). Although Muslims from the Northwest frontiers would

sometimes make the Hajj in considerable numbers, overall they had less immediate access to the maritime system as a whole. The urban coastal elites, meanwhile, used the texts and ideas they were importing from that system to argue that they, and not the frontier Muslims, possessed the most authentic and authoritative understanding of Islam. When leading Chinese Muslims returned from studying in Cairo or from their work with the wartime diplomatic delegations, many often proceeded directly to the Northwest frontiers to use what they had learned to propagandize both "correct" Islam and Chinese nationalism to the frontier Muslims. The fact that the same people drove these "sea-based" and "land-based" initiatives is not at all a coincidence. The two sets of activities were linked by the ethos of transnationalist integrationism.

Second is the refusal to conceptualize Islam as only a matter of "private faith." Shahab Ahmed offers a conceptualization of public versus private Islam, defining private Islam as the interior truth of the self (which is often not accessible through historical sources), and public Islam as "meaning-making" that can be communicated to others (which is accessible far more often).[66] I have repeatedly found, consistent with Ahmed's definition, that when acting vis-à-vis a variety of publics, the Chinese Muslim elites more often than not did the things they did and said the things they said *as Muslims*. Most notably, this includes their participation in GMD frontier nation-building (see Chapter Two), their anti-Communism (see Chapters Two and Six), their wartime diplomatic delegations to the Middle East and Southeast Asia (see Chapter Four), and their attempts to reconcile Islam with Communism (see Chapter Six). In other words, collaborating with the Chinese state is not automatically a sign that the Chinese Muslim elites were somehow "less" Muslim or "bad" Muslims. Rather, it requires a broader definition of public Islam, and in particular challenges the assumption that Islam normally and normatively

[66] Ahmed, *What is Islam*, pp. 378-79.

means not supporting a non-Islamic government. Indeed, as with members of the Han Kitab generation, the Republican-era Chinese Muslim elites saw contributing to the preservation of Chinese sociopolitical order to be an integral feature of their identity as Chinese Muslims. Their public pursuits therefore cannot be seen as separate from their Islam (to assume otherwise would be to naturalize the modern Christian notion of a separation of "church and state").

Third is the problem of ethnos versus ethos: of seeing Chinese Muslim history in the early twentieth century more retrospectively as the prehistory of their ethnicization as on of the fifty-five "Ethnic Minority Nationalities" (*shaoshu minzu*) of the PRC, or more prospectively as a complex process of contingent but deliberate entanglement with both transnational Islam and the modern Chinese state that eventually resulted in the articulation of ethnic status, but not at all inevitably so.[67] This, too, is very much a problem of sources. The ethos of transnationalist integrationism is always already baked into the enormous volume of writings the Chinese Muslim elites produced about themselves and their community's history in both Chinese and (to a somewhat lesser extent) in Arabic—not to mention into much of the subsequent secondary scholarhip about them. Eventually, this meant arguing that the "Hui" were and are an ethnic group, and that their history could be traced in linear fashion from the earliest arrivals of Muslims during the Tang Dynasty up to the present. In the beginning, however, it was the ethos that posited the ethnos, and not vice versa.

Structure of the Dissertation: Expanding Geographies, Converging Concepts

[67] Again, on Chinese Muslim self-ethnicization, see Cieciura, "Ethnicity or Religion?" in Lipman, *Islamic Thought in China*, pp. 107-46, and Gladney, *Muslim Chinese*. Notably, the Chinese Muslims were unlike most of China's smaller ethnic minorities, who more or less had ethnic identities arbitrarily imposed on them in the 1950s by the PRC: on this see especially Tom Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation*.

This study proceeds in a way that links chronology with varying arguments, themes, and analytical scales. It begins in Chinese Muslim mosques, madrasas, and printshops. It then follows Chinese Muslims inland to the frontiers; back east to the urban centers of Beijing, Shanghai, and Nanjing; overseas to Singapore, Lucknow, Mecca, Istanbul, Jerusalem, and Cairo; and finally to their various fates across the Mainland, Taiwan, and a variety of other countries.

The first two chapters outline the dynamic of transnationalist integrationism. Chapter One argues that Chinese Muslim practices of "textual transnationalism," though multiregional and complex, resulted by the early 1930s in a normative preference for Arabic influences and Islamic modernist thought, as opposed to other languages or ideologies. As such, it arrowed the textual and ideological gap between urban coastal Chinese Muslims and Islamic modernists outside China, while widening the gap between those urban coastal Chinese Muslims and their own coreligionists on the Northwest frontiers. Chapter Two examines the consequences of this textual transnationalism for elite Chinese Muslims' support for GMD state- and nation-building in the coastal cities and on the frontiers in the years immediately before and during the war with Japan (1937-45), including their efforts to establish Islamic modernist schools in the Northwest frontiers and to propagandize (including in Arabic) to frontier Muslims.

Chapters Three and Four detail some of the main consequences of transnationalist integrationism, characterized as "narratives in action." Chapter Three illustrates how leading Chinese Muslims applied the pro-science polemics and historical logics of Islamic modernism in order to mount a response to Han Islamophobia and construct a way for Chinese Muslims to "contribute" to Chinese "civilization" generally, and later to the war with Japan. Chapter Four moves outside China, providing an account of the Chinese Muslim wartime diplomatic

delegations in the context of the longer-term co-optation of the Hajj and Muslim travel as an instrument of Chinese foreign policy.

Continuing to alternate between the intellectual and the political, Chapters Five and Six present the two turning points that closed this period of Chinese Muslim history. Chapter Five analyzes the careers and thought of the younger generation of Chinese Muslim leaders that studied in Cairo in the 1930s and 1940s, arguing that through their studies at al-Azhar and their dialogues with Arab thinkers and Arab Muslim activists in Cairo, they attempted to formulate new, sounder bases for safeguarding their community's belonging in China, ones that would be less instrumentalized than mere political collaboration. Chapter Six narrates how the characters that appear throughout this study were divided from one another by the resumed Chinese Civil War (1945-49), with some relocating to Taiwan with the GMD leadership, others remaining on the Mainland, and yet others choosing "exile" in a variety of Muslim and non-Muslim countries.

Though the Chinese Muslim elites themselves became marginalized from high politics in the era of Cold War and decolonization, their narratives of history and identity, while ultimately contingent, have nevertheless been normalized as the virtually uncontested canonical truth of Chinese Islam to this day. As such, their widespread contacts and numerous writings form a hidden background to contemporary Sino-Islamic relations. Perhaps most importantly, their concerns were in many cases shared with other interwar political and intellectual elites, other non-Han groups in China, and Muslims throughout the world. For these reasons and others, this study, rather than seeing Chinese Muslims as "peripheral" to both Islam and China, places modern Chinese Muslim thought and action within the broader reconfigurations of politics, knowledge, and identity brought about by Ottoman and Qing collapse and the emergence of territorial nationalisms across Asia. It also offers new understandings of the scope, content, and

consequences of Islamic modernism and of Muslim-state relations in modern China, rethinking the relationship between religion and reform in a decolonizing world. Overall, it moves beyond a circulation-based understanding of modern global encounters, and instead maps the contingent ways in which forms of mobility came to serve hegemonic processes of state- and nation-building: how flows of people and ideas helped create borders rather than simply crossing them.

PART I

TRANSNATIONALIST INTEGRATIONISM

CHAPTER ONE: ISLAMIC MODERNISM IN CHINA

> The *ulama* of China read old Arabic books and understand them well, but they fall short expressing themselves in writing in either Arabic or Chinese. With Chinese, this is because they detest using the language of the country to which they belong except by necessity, as it is the language of the *kuffar* [unbelievers] which is not spoken by those who are destined for Paradise. As for Arabic, they are familiar with its classical style but not with that of its newspapers and journals, nor do they know well how to speak it. They transmit learning only orally, so when one of them dies, his knowledge is buried with him. Such indeed is the state of the majority of our believers, and among our *ulama*, it is rare to find anyone much better.
> –Imam Muhammad Tawadu‘ Pang Shiqian (in Arabic)[68]

Introduction: Chinese Muslims' Changing Relationship with the Arabic Language

Pang Shiqian is a narrator worth listening to. Pang (1902-58), known in Arabic as Muhammad Tawadu‘, was born in the old Muslim village of Sangpo, Henan, distinguished himself as an imam, scholar, and instructor, and in 1938 led the sixth and last delegation of Chinese Muslim students to al-Azhar, remaining in Egypt for nine years as the leader of these Chinese Azharites, and returning to China only in late 1946.[69] More than his accomplishments, however, it is Pang's perspective that merits special attention here. He was one of the foremost proponents of improving Arabic education as a means of modernizing Islam in China and improving the conditions of Muslims there, and also one of the foremost critics of Chinese Muslims' earlier efforts toward those ends. Furthermore, living and studying in Cairo and writing in Arabic afforded Pang a type of distance not enjoyed by his coreligionists who remained their whole

[68] Muhammad Tawadu‘ (a.k.a. Pang Shiqian), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam* [*China and Islam*] (Cairo: Qism al-ittisal bi-l-‘alam al-islami li-jama‘at al-ikhwan al-muslimin [Islamic World Outreach Division of the Society of the Muslim Brothers], 1945), p. 83.

[69] Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "'Nine Years in Egypt': The Chinese at al-Azhar University." *HAGAR Studies in Culture, Polity, and Identities* 8/1 (2008): 105-28. See also Ma Bozhong, *Minguo liu ai huizu xueshengpai qianshi yanjiu* [*Research on the Republican-Era Chinese Azharites*]. Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2012.

lives in China, or did not stay away quite so long as he did. The mere fact that he wrote the above words in Arabic, after years abroad, and far from the watchful eyes of the Guomindang (GMD) government and the Chinese press, makes them a valuable counterpoint to the dominant narratives of loyalty and belonging that emanated more easily, or at least more frequently, from the words and writings of Chinese Muslim elites at this time. At the same time, Pang's statement illuminates that dominant discourse by virtue of its contrapuntal perspective. Even as he sat writing in Arabic, Pang was thinking about Chinese Muslims' past and future relationship with the Arabic language. Even though he expressed rare overt disdain here for nonbelieving Chinese and for the Chinese language, his goal nevertheless remained to improve Chinese Muslims' knowledge of Arabic in order to improve their lives and their Islam *in China*.

From the first through the fourth decades of the twentieth century, leading Chinese Muslim *ulama*, publishers, and lay intellectuals in China's urban coastal regions imported, collected, read, debated, disseminated, and occasionally translated both multiregional modern Muslim print media and classic Arabic Islamic texts. Simultaneously, they began to print their own periodicals and mass-producible books modeled on the print media, and new interpretive works to explain the classic texts. They wrote primarily in Chinese, but incorporated some English where necessary and an increasing amount of Arabic wherever possible (first handwritten and lithographed, later printed). In doing this, they solidified the perceived boundaries between genres (newspaper, journal, book); set those genres somewhat apart from older forms that were not mass produced, and whose primary place was not the street but the madrasa (grammatical primers, doctrinal primers, prayer books, Han Kitab works); and developed a new set of normative positions on what Islam was (a "religion" or "civilization"

existing in the world, rather than a comprehensive way of life existing merely in China or unto itself). I refer to these processes collectively as "textual transnationalism."[70]

Republican-era Chinese Muslims' newfound ability to import, engage with, and imitate an unprecedentedly high volume and variety of texts from abroad brought a sudden and welcome end to the relative isolation they felt had afflicted their community during the Qing (1644-1912). It also fundamentally reconfigured their understanding of the Islamic world and of Islamic knowledge. Practices of textual transnationalism were certainly facilitated by new technologies of "steam and print,"[71] but their contours and consequences cannot be reduced to a manifestation of European-led infrastructural transformation. Rather, the primarily significance of textual transnationalism for modern Chinese Muslims lies not in the fact of circulation, but rather in what substantive new prescriptions it enabled politically, socially, religiously, and culturally.

In the case of both modern print media and classic texts, Chinese Muslim textual transnationalism meant that earlier patterns of linguistic, geographical, and doctrinal eclecticism eventually gave way to an increasingly exclusive emphasis on the Arabic language and on

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[70] Matsumoto, "Yuehua"; Matsumoto, "Perfection of Dual Loyalty"; Benite, "Bringing 'Abduh to China";

Structurally speaking, urban coastal Chinese Muslims' engagement with various literatures from outside China entirely resembled that same process as undertaken by China's majority non-Muslim population, again especially in the coastal cities. The authoritative material history of this process, focusing in particular on Shanghai's Commercial Press (*Shangwu yinshuguan*), is Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1878-1937* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

Chinese Muslim textual transnationalism also resembled technological and intellectual trends that had taken root one to two generations earlier in the Middle East and Indian Ocean, and continued to develop during the early twentieth century, eventually intersecting with the histories of certain Chinese Muslims themselves (see Chapter Five). See especially Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East: A History* (New York: Oxford UP, 1995); Isabel Hofmeyr, *Gandhi's Printing Press: Experiments in Slow Reading* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2013), especially Chs. 2 and 3; and James A. Gelvin and Nile Green, *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014).

The full range of intellectual and literary implications of textual transnationalism is typically known as the *Nahda* ("awakening") in Middle Eastern contexts and the "May Fourth Movement" or "New Culture Movement" in China (though we should note that the latter came about more suddenly after the collapse of the Qing), both of which focus overwhelmingly on "secular" writings and on each region's relationship with "the West." The scholarly literature on these movements is far too vast to summarize here; several relevant works appear in the bibliography.

[71] Gelvin and Green, *Global Muslims*.

Islamic modernist texts from the Middle East (or texts seen as compatible with that orientation). To an extent, modernists predated modernism: Arabic Islamic modernist influences had to an extent been present among certain Chinese Muslim *ulama* since the first decade of the twentieth century, but these influences only became mainstream in the early 1930s. Only in 1930 did modernist, Arabic influences come at the expense of other influences—such as more familiar Persian texts or the more culturally proximate Islamic movements in South or Southeast Asia. This chapter addresses the tremendous scope of modern Chinese Muslim textual transnationalism, but also seeks to answer the question of what the Arabization of that textual transnationalism did and did not entail, why Arabization occurred, why it occurred at the particular moment it did, and what its limits were.

It may seem strange to focus so much on Arabic. After all, the primary language of daily life for most Chinese Muslims was Chinese (or at least some spoken dialect of it). Chinese was also the language of most of their accumulated canonical works that explained and interpreted Islam. With few exceptions such as Pang Shiqian, Chinese Muslims in the twentieth century did not compose original works in Arabic, and the extent to which they used Arabic texts, even after they physically possessed them, is not always clear. At the same time, however, Arabic has undeniably flourished in ritual, scholarly, aesthetic, and other capacities among Muslims all over the world despite being, for the majority of them, a "non-native" language (one could go further and argue that the history of the Arabic language outside the Arab world challenges definitions of nativeness and non-nativeness). As we will see, Chinese Muslims did make use of Arabic in significant ways, even if this use was not as extensive as in other Muslim societies, and even if it did not exclude the use of other languages.[72] Nor was the significance of Arabic limited to the

[72] A brief comparison may be of use here. Tahera Qutbuddin has provided a helpful classification of the uses of Arabic in India from the eighth century through the twentieth: "liturgy, teaching and study, nomenclature,

number of believers who could read and speak it: even those who failed to learn Arabic in practice still insisted in theory that gaining better knowledge of Arabic would make China's Muslims better and more modern Muslims, and thereby help to improve their lives and their status in China and their connectedness to Muslims outside China. In other words, quite apart from questions of linguistic proficiency, the promotion of Arabic education and the attempt to use Arabic texts was one of the most important metrics of Chinese Muslim leaders' Islamic modernism, an ideological orientation that was both transnationalist vis-à-vis the world's Muslims and integrationist vis-à-vis Chinese state and society.

It is also true that Arabic had never really gone away, even in the Ming and Qing when Persian and Turkic works became dominant in Chinese madrasas, and when the Han Kitab

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inscriptions, vocabulary assimilation, composition of religio-scholarly texts, composition of secular-scholarly texts, and marginal utilitarian uses." Tahera Qutbuddin, "Arabic in India: A Survey and Classification of Its Uses, Compared with Persian," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 127/3 (July-September 2007): p. 315. See also Muhammad Qasim Zaman, "Arabic, the Arab Middle East, and the Definition of Muslim Identity in Twentieth-Century India," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 8/1 (April 1998): pp. 59-81.

Of course, Islam and the Arabic language received a boon in India that they did not in China, thanks to the reign of the Mughals (1526-40, 1555-1857). While Muslims never ruled in China nor reached the population levels of their Indian brethren, however, at least five of Qutbuddin's eight categories of uses for Arabic still held true among Chinese Muslims prior to the twentieth century: liturgy, teaching and study, inscriptions (primarily in mosques), vocabulary assimilation, and composition of religio-scholarly texts (primarily in the special case of Yunnan). In addition to these, we should note that an Arabic-Persian script known in China as *xiao'erjing* was long used to transliterate Chinese, and thereby to translate Arabic texts for Muslim populations in northwest China who could only read Arabic, but only speak Chinese (one could argue that *xiao'erjing*'s relationship to Chinese resembles that of Aljamiado to Spanish and perhaps even that of Urdu to Hindi, though with clear differences of scale). Finally, in the twentieth century, a handful of works also appear in a sixth of Qutbuddin's categories, that of secular-scholarly texts (though, we should note, "secular" only in the sense of not being works of doctrine, ritual, etc., even while they could be partly *about* such topics). The three most significant of such works composed in Arabic by Chinese Muslims were all completed by Chinese Azharites: Muhammad Makin al-Sini (a.k.a. Ma Jian), *Nazrah Jami'a* (Cairo: al-Matba'a al-Salafiyya, 1935); Tawadu' (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*; and Badr al-Din al-Sini (a.k.a. Hai Weiliang), *al-'Alaqat bayn al-'arab wa-l-sin* (Cairo: 1950).

To appreciate the extent of vocabulary assimilation from Arabic to Chinese, which was primarily limited to Chinese Muslims, see Jianping Wang, *Glossary of Chinese Islamic Terms* (Curzon, 2001).

On *jingtang jiaoyu*, see Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, pp. 50-51; Feng Zenglie, "Ming Qing shiqi Shaanxi Yisilanjiao de jingtang jiaoyu [Islamic mosque education in Shannxi during the Ming and Qing]," *Qingdai Zhongguo Yisilanjiao lunji* [*Essays on Islam in Qing China*] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1981). For comparisons to other historical examples, see A.G. Chejne, *Muslim Spain: Its History and Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1974), and Gerard Albert Wiegers, *Islamic Literature in Spanish and Aljamiado* (Leiden: Brill, 1993).

authors undertook to translate Islamic thought into a Confucian idiom using the Chinese language. Han Kitab works often interspersed transliterations of Arabic words, or actual Arabic script, into the main Chinese text, and some Han Kitab authors (most notably Liu Zhi) also compiled bibliographies including Arabic works.[73] In the twentieth century, it was not so much that Arabic suddenly returned from a state of total absence, but rather that its position rose while the status of Persian and Turkic works mostly diminished.[74]

Meanwhile, textual transnationalism and Arabization also did not entail rejection of the Chinese Islamic canon. The Han Kitab texts were re-published in the Republican era by the same urban *ulama* who were exhibiting an increased thirst for Arabic.[75] Republican-era Chinese Muslim leaders increasingly sought to incorporate Middle Eastern Arabic texts more systematically into their knowledge of Islam, and to use the texts as Arab Muslims did, yet simultaneously continued to identify the Han Kitab authors as their intellectual forebears, and in some cases even continued to render certain Islamic concepts in Confucian vocabulary.[76]

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[73] Donald Daniel Leslie, Yang Daye, and Ahmed Youssef, "Arabic Works Shown to the 'Qianlong' Emperor in 1782," *Central Asiatic Journal* 45/1 (2001): pp. 7-27.

[74] I say "mostly" even here because the use and translation of some Persian texts persisted even into the 1920s, even by some of the figures credited most directly with "Arabizing" Chinese Islam, such as the "Four Great Imams": Da Pusheng, Wang Jingzhai, Ha Decheng, and Ma Songting.

[75] Muslim bookstore catalogs from Beijing and Shanghai, contained in Box 17 of the Harvard-Yenching Pickens Collection, indicate as much, as do occasional bibliographic advertisements published in *Yuehua*.

[76] The significance of Arabic to the modernization of Chinese Islam is not a new question. Others have characterized Chinese Muslims' twentieth-century education reforms and collection of Arabic texts as a process of "Arabization." On one level, this signified a linguistic departure from the Han Kitab tradition, even while echoing its politics. On another, it also came at the expense of Persian and Central Asian texts, which in earlier periods had stood alongside and even surpassed Arabic in importance. See Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "From 'Literati' to 'Ulama': The Origins of Chinese Muslim Nationalist Historiography." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 9/4 (Winter 2003/4): 83-109 and "Nine Years in Egypt"; Gillette, Maris. *Between Mecca and Beijing: Modernization and Consumption among Urban Chinese Muslims*. Stanford, 2000, esp. 1-21, 221-236.

The term "Arabization" can be misleading, however. One reason for this has to do with aesthetics: on a basic level, the term might call to mind reviving the practice of building mosques with minarets and colonnades rather than with painted wooden beams and slanted stone roofs. This is largely an issue of the present day, when Egypt and India's status as cosmopolitan Islamic centers has declined, and when Chinese Hajjis travel by plane straight to Mecca and do not traverse the vast and diverse spaces in between. It is also an issue of much earlier

The Islamic modernism and Arabo-centrism born of Chinese Muslim textual transnationalism, however, did lead modernist Chinese Muslims to invent certain adversaries. Most modernist Chinese Muslims came from urban eastern China: Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Guangzhou, Nanjing, Shandong, and parts of Henan. This meant that they were descended intellectually and in some cases biologically from the Han Kitab authors of the Ming and early Qing.[77] As such, they had come to rely heavily on Chinese sources such as the Han Kitab texts for understanding Islam, and even used Chinese characters as phonetic aids for learning and reading Arabic.[78] As was the case with Muslim societies elsewhere (and, we might add, with many Christians and non-Muslim Chinese), modernists imagined their "internal" enemies to be heterodox, traditionalist, and superstitious Muslims (the external enemies included Orientalists, imperialists, and missionaries).[79] Much like madrasa education across the Islamic world, the Ming-Qing system of Chinese Muslim "scripture hall education" (*jingtang jiaoyu*) was criticized for emphasizing rote memorization and for its unstandardized and vulnerable practices of oral knowledge transmission (noted by Pang above).[80] By contrast, Chinese Muslims' new-style

periods of Islam's history in China, particularly the early Ming. On the early-Ming Sinicization of mosque architecture, as well as dress, dwellings, and surnames, see Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "Follow the White Camel: Islam in China to 1800," in David O. Morgan and Anthony Reid, eds., *The New Cambridge History of Islam: Volume 3: The Eastern Islamic World, Eleventh to Eighteenth Centuries* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2010), p. 422.

Another reason has to do with contingency and multiregionalism. Again, Arabization was not a uniform or inevitable process. Chinese Muslims' increasing engagement with Arabic texts and actors was not determined solely by the rise of modern communication technologies, nor was it an automatic reversion to Islam's Arab essence. Rather, steam and print heralded not only the recovery of Arabic sources, but the intensification of Chinese Muslims' exposure to multiple Islamic regions including South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Turkey in addition to the Arab Middle East, as well as with Western writings on Islam.

[77] Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*.

[78] Several examples can be found in Boxes 32 and 33 of the Harvard-Yenching Pickens Collection.

[79] Gesink, *Islamic Reform and Conservatism*; Ghazal, "Sufism, Ijtihad, and Modernity."

[80] Robert W. Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, eds., *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2007).

schools would balance "traditional" topics such as Arabic language and Islamic doctrine with "modern" ones such as mathematics, geography, biology, chemistry, physics, music, hygiene, and physical education, as well as an increased emphasis on Chinese language. Theoretically, modernist Chinese Muslims' anti-tradtionalism could apply to any imam or local leader who resisted incorporating "modern" subjects into madrasa education. In practice, however, this stance set itself especially against the Sufi-dominated Muslim communities on China's Northwest frontiers (Shaanxi, Gansu, Ningxia, Qinghai, and Xinjiang), and to an extent Muslims in more proximate but poorer regions (Henan, Chahar, Shanxi, and so on; Yunnan and Sichuan, or parts of them, tended to be more ideologically tied to the coast).

An irony, however, is that those supposedly "backward" Muslims—at least the ones in the Northwest who possessed literacy—were if anything more skilled in the Arabic language than the *ulama* of urban eastern China.[81] But by contrast, there is no evidence that they polemicized about the need for Arabization (or if they did, not in the same way as the urban coastal modernists). They simply continued to use the same Arabic, Persian, and Turkic texts they had been using since the seventeenth century or earlier, and even used Arabic letters to transliterate Chinese (the opposite of the urban coastal Chinese Muslims). As I will show, by the 1920s and 1930s, Chinese Muslim institutions in urban eastern China had greatly expanded their

[81] This is admittedly a claim based partly on non-systematic anthropological observation and informal conversations with imams and other Muslims in northwestern China at the time of research (2013-16). It is also, however, based on scholars' general observation that Northwest Muslims, most of whom were traditionally more literate in Arabic than in Chinese (despite primarily speaking dialects of Chinese), would study Arabic texts in their original form, whereas Muslims in the coastal regions would use a set of Chinese characters as phonetic stand-ins to help them approximate the pronunciation of the Quran and other texts. The former tendency can be observed in scholarship on the textual traditions of the Northwest Sufi orders, particularly Florian Sobieroj, "Arabic Manuscripts on the Periphery: Northwest Africa, Yemen and China," in *Manuscript Cultures: Mapping the Field*, edited by Jörg Quenzer, Dmitry Bondarev, and Jan-Ulrich Sobisch (De Gruyter, 2014), pp. 17-29. Again, the latter tendency can be observed in the many textbooks, doctrinal primers, and prayer books from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century available in the Pickens Collection, particularly Boxes 28, 32, and 33.

Arabic collections, to the point that those collections more closely resembled those of madrasas outside China than those of the Sufis in the Northwest. Although it is difficult to measure precisely, relative lack of access to print technology and maritime trade routes almost certainly meant that textual change could not have occurred on the same scale in the Northwest at this time. The Arabization of modern Chinese Islam primarily meant the Arabization of the certain practices and assumptions of the urban coastal *ulama*, not of China's Muslims as a whole.

For the urban coastal Chinese Muslims, textual transnationalism produced Arabo-centrism, and not the other way around. Urban coastal Chinese Muslims' increasing preference for the Arabic language and perception of the normativity of Arabness in Islam were not foregone conclusions owing to the empirical centrality of Arabic and Arabness. Rather, Arabo-centrism was a contingent result of the very process of multiregional exchange. In fact, at first it was engagement with Japanese, Ottoman, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Orientalist knowledge of Islam—more so than Arabic Middle Eastern knowledge—that gave Chinese Muslims an impression of the singular importance of the Arabs and their language, and relatedly, of the Arab-dominated Islamic modernist position on Islam. The assumption that Islam was fundamentally an expression of Arab culture had crystallized only relatively recently among both Orientalists and missionaries and certain Arab Islamic modernists, and was only gradually and circuitously absorbed by Chinese Muslims (and other "peripheral" Muslims). This racialized assumption had the feedback effect of intensifying Chinese Muslims' sense of isolation from the Islamic world at the same moment when they felt they were overcoming that isolation. At the same time, it also appeared to provide a blueprint for reversing that isolation: restoring dialogue with Islam outside China now simply meant studying the Arabic language, recovering the lost connection with Islam's Arabic essence, and establishing discursive links between that Arab

essence and Chinese Muslim history and identity. This project had precedents in the Han Kitab generation, but the much greater ease of physically traveling to the Arab Middle East as of the late nineteenth century fundamentally altered it, making reconnecting with Arabic and Arabness logistically easier, but conceptually harder.[82] Thus, to the extent that an Arabization of modern Chinese Islam did occur, it represented not the metahistorical "return to the origin" that its proponents claimed, but rather signified an internalization of Orientalist definitions of Islam mediated through Islamic modernists and, ironically, through non-Arab Muslims from other regions who were experiencing similar issues at a similar time.

This chapter explores the roles of Arabic and Arabness for modern Chinese Muslims by focusing on three interrelated processes. The first is their determination to make contact with and improve knowledge of Muslim communities outside China, collect their periodicals and other publications, and establish their own print media and educational institutions. At first, these basic building blocks of Chinese Muslim textual transnationalism involved accepted virtually any materials on Islam from outside China, in virtually any language. Only in time did they privilege Arabic, Arabness, and the Arab world over other Muslim languages, peoples, and regions.

The second process, curricular reform in Chinese madrasas, was the object of the first. The discovery or "recovery" of previously unavailable classic Arabic works provided teaching and reference material for the Islamic component of new-style school curricula. This process

[82] Zvi Ben-Dor Benite makes a similar point in "'Nine Years in Egypt': The Chinese at al-Azhar University." *HAGAR Studies in Culture, Polity, and Identities* 8/1 (2008): p. 116: "Creation myths written into the into the Chinese Islamic canon during the early 1700s, for example, explicitly link the Chinese Muslims to 'Arabia' (*Tianfang*), by claiming that they were the direct descendants of Arab men sent personally by Muhammad to China, where they had married Chinese women and remained. The purpose of such traditions was to assert that Arab Muslims were the ethnic group to which Chinese Muslims were most clsely tied. Again, it is this insistence on a direct link to Islam's original geography that marks one of the strongest expressions of Chinese Muslim 'diasporic,' or exilic, self-consciousness: a profound sense of being displaced and removed from the Islamic world and from Islamic history." See also Zvi Ben-Dor, "'Even Unto China': Displacement and Chinese Muslim Myths of Origin." *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies*. Winter 2002/3: 93-114.

brought additional ironies, allowing the urban Chinese *ulama* to improve and refine their *positive* knowledge of Islam, but also drew them into a transnationally articulated set of *normative* positions on what the true Islam was. From a textual situation characterized by eclecticism, regional variation, and oral transmission, by the early 1930s Chinese *ulama* had begun to institute a more standardized curriculum built on distinct genres Quran, *hadith*, *tafsir*, and so on.

Only the third process, however, fully answers the question of why Arabic and Arabness received increasing emphasis. The process was the sweeping transformation of the structures, institutions, and bases of knowledge themselves—a phenomenon common to China, the Islamic world, and to an extent the world as a whole in the early twentieth century, but that had specific consequences for Islam in China. Chinese Muslim textual transnationalism engaged with many topics extending beyond the strictly "religious," such as history, science, medicine, philosophy, and international politics. In the end, this extra-doctrinal engagement had consequences for modern Chinese Islamic thought just as profound as the transformation of formal doctrinal knowledge. I will focus here on the one example of "Islamic civilization," an idea increasingly assumed to be rooted in Arab culture and to have undergone periods of "florescence and decline." As complex as the process of textual transnationalism was, it took place in the context of this even broader epistemological transformation or "conceptual convergence" in which Islamic modernist thinkers outside China and their (largely unknown) Chinese Muslim audiences alike found themselves in dialogue with a common set of Orientalists, from whom they derived this crucial *new* concept of an eternally Arab-centered "Islamic civilization."

In sum, Chinese Muslims were rediscovering the Islamic world outside China at the exact moment when actors on all sides were reaching a *new* consensus that the Arabs and Arabic represented the core of Islam. This chapter traces—in terms of regions, institutions, genres, and

ideological formations—the uneven but discernable emergence of a recognizably Islamic modernist orientation among coastal Chinese *ulama* by the early 1930s, one that privileged Arabic and Arabness, and as such resembled trends around the Indian Ocean and Arab world much more than it resembled the ideas and practices of Chinese Muslims' own Chinese-speaking coreligionists on the northwestern frontiers.

Textual Transnationalism I: Chinese Muslim Modernist Institutions and Print Media

Textual transnationalism sought to (re)forge connections with Muslims outside China in order to improve Islamic knowledge and institutions in China. The stakes of this project were high. 'Abd al-Rahman Wang Kuan, the first major Chinese imam to travel to the Middle East in the twentieth century (Cairo and Istanbul, 1905-07), and later chairman of the Chinese Islamic Progress Association, composed a letter in Arabic to the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid II (likely with the assistance of Ottoman emissaries) assessing Chinese Muslims' predicament:

> In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy!...O noble and forgiving Caliph, great one of the age, shadow of God, all Creation knows that the impoverished, far-flung Muslims of Beijing arrived there in the eighth century after the Hijra of the Prophet (God bless him and grant him salvation!) or earlier…at present, they are overcome by the subordination of the Sultan to the unbelievers [*al-kafirin*, i.e. *al-kuffar*], their Islam subject to the regulation of barbaric unbelief [*al-jahiliyya*]. Science and knowledge languish; their light grows dim in the schools and mosques of Beijing…If we had oriented ourselves more toward conditions [in your region], we would have been more attuned to the ways of the world both lowly and lofty [*al-din wa-l-dunya*], and the joys of faith and Islam. We thank and praise Almighty God and hope to return to stand by your side. But alas we cannot do so at this time, and so we ask God's help to preserve your will and your state…
>
> As for the Muslims of China, a great many of them had once been Muslims of the Abode of Islam [*ahl al-Islam*, i.e. *dar al-Islam*], and all of them are of the People of the Prophetic Example [*ahl al-sunna wa-l-jama'a*, i.e. Sunnis]. They reside in Beijing, Nanjing, Shanghai, Gansu, Ningxia, Guangdong, and other places…As for the unbelievers among us, the reason for their unbelief is a paucity of books and study. And as for the weak [sic] of our Islam, its cause is the lack of communication between us and Your Eminence, as well as the power of the Christians who have sent their emissaries to the Sultan of Beijing. Herein

> we ask our great lord to send his own emissary to our ruler the Sultan of Beijing, so as to embolden our Sultan with the wisdom of your mighty countenance, to show us the light of faith, and to fortify the path of Islam by extending it to our Sultan. We ask you to send us bearers of the good news [*du'a*], and in any case to keep us always in mind and never forget us.[83]

This passage summarizes the sentiment that reviving Islam in China requires contact with Islam and Muslims outside China: "lack of communication" had made Chinese Muslims "weak," led to a "paucity of books and study," and corrupted belief. Wang hints, furthermore, that in a world where political unity is impossible ("[We] hope to return to stand by your side…But alas we cannot do so at this time"), the second-best outcome would be for Muslims in the Middle East to send texts and emissaries to help the Chinese Muslims be better Muslims, and that this in turn will improve their conditions in China. Wang attempted to implement his plan upon returning to China, applying what he had seen and learned in Cairo and Ottoman Istanbul by founding a new-style madrasa at Beijing's Niujie Mosque (the city's oldest and largest). While continuing to teach Persian and Turkish, this school devoted more attention than others to both Arabic and Chinese instruction and even managed to recruit a certain number of foreign instructors to assist in the task; it also sought to integrate modern subjects with the Islamic sciences—one of the first madrasas in China to do so.[84]

Though not mentioning Arabic explicitly, Pang Shiqian later implied that the revival of Arabic instruction, and the improved capacity to reform Islam in China that resulted, was the primary significance of Wang Kuan's mission:

> God be praised, for the twentieth century arrived, and with it the modernist *ulama* [*al-'ulama al-mujaddidun*]. Among them was the late Hajj 'Abd al-Rahman Wang Haoran [i.e. Wang Kuan], who visited Egypt and Turkey in 1905. He requested the Ottoman Caliph Abdülhamid II's assistance in spreading Islam in

[83] I am grateful to Ulug Kuzuoglu for sharing this letter with me, which he found in the Ottoman Archives in 2011.

[84] Zhao Zhenwu, for instance, studied Arabic, Turkish, and Persian there.

> China. Abdülhamid II therefore sent a religious and educational delegation to Beijing chaired by Sheikh Ali Rida, accompanied by Sheikh Hafiz.[85]

In other words, the reform of Islam in China emphasized Arabic from an early point, but it did not begin as an Arabo-centric project in every sense of the word. In the first two to three decades of the twentieth century, the drive to improve Arabic instruction was not yet tied to a broader Islamic modernist program, to the compulsion for doctrinal "correctness," or to an Arabo-centric understanding of Islam. That would all come later.

Wang Kuan's mission to Cairo and Istanbul should not be taken as confirmation that Chinese Islamic modernism was from the beginning a Middle-East-centered or Arabizing force. Soon after Wang returned from the Middle East, a separate group of thirty-six Chinese Muslims set out to study abroad, of all places, in Tokyo—not unlike their Han Chinese intellectual counterparts such as Liang Qichao or Zhang Taiyan.[86] These Chinese Muslims called themselves the "Tokyo Pure and True Study-Abroad Educational Society" (*liu dong qingzhen jiaoyu hui*). In Tokyo, they published one of the earliest Chinese Muslim periodicals of the twentieth century, named *Xinghui pian* ("Awakening Islam" or "Awakening Muslims").[87] This bulletin consisted of only a single issue, published in December 1908, and printed with lead-based letterpress (*qianyin*). *Xinghui pian*'s publication coincided with a unique juncture following Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) but preceding the full onset of Japanese imperialism, at

[85] Tawadu' (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, p. 69, originally translated in John T. Chen, "Re-Orientation: The Chinese Azharites between *Umma* and Third World, 1938-55," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East (CSSAAME)* 34/1 (May 2014): p. 37.

[86] Tang, *Global Space*; Murthy, *Zhang Taiyan*.

[87] A detailed discussion of the Tokyo encounter and *Xinghui pian* can be found in Shuang Wen, "Mediated Imaginations: Chinese-Arab Connections in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries" (PhD dissertation, Georgetown University, 2015), pp. 126-38.

which time Japan was perceived as a model of "Eastern" progress by both Chinese and Muslim reformers, and even as the potential "savior of Islam" against Western imperialism.[88]

Xinghui pian may or may not have been the first Chinese Muslim periodical. Either way, it was probably the first to articulate an explicit relationship between the reform of Islamic education, the idea of a nation-state, and the status of Chinese Muslims, three years prior to the Revolution of 1911 that brought down the Qing and established the Republic. The inaugural preface stated in no uncertain terms: "[The reform of] religion and education is the starting point for propelling social progress, which in turn will enlighten the nation and restore power and prosperity to the Lands under Heaven. That being achieved, the eventual result, distant though it may be, can be nothing other than self-rule."[89] Other essays bound in the same bulletin, however, were not so unequivocal. As Matsumoto Masumi discusses, one author focused less on political autonomy and more on peaceful coexistence in a Chinese system: "Even though there are racial differences among the Han, Manchus, Mongolians, Hui and Tibetans, they should not fight each other. Since they are crews of the same state ship, those races should live in harmony…Religions always encourage people to do their best and are prime movers of the society. In accordance with the current of the times, we have to reform our religion."[90] Regardless of the end goal, the

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[88] Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim," p. 1141; Tanaka, *Japan's Orient*; Aydin, *Politics of Anti-Westernism*; Hammond, "Conundrum of Collaboration."

As Selçuk Esenbel has shown, an "Islam circle" consisting of Japanese military and civilian elites combined with their Muslim associates emerged in the first decade of the twentieth century, interested in the potential role Islam could play in the Japanese Empire's pan-Asian policy. It is unclear whether the Chinese Muslims' studies in Tokyo were directly related to Japan's emerging Islam policy, or whether the simply went there for the same reasons as non-Muslim Chinese. Wen, "Mediated Imaginations," p. 128, suggests that the Chinese ambassador to Japan, Yang Shu, who was also a Muslim, played an important role.

[89] "Xinghui pian fakan xu [Inaugural Preface to *Xinghui pian*]," *Xinghui pian*, p. 3.

[90] Matsumoto, "Completion of the Idea of Dual Loyalty," n6.

Xinghui pian authors tended to agree that reforming Islamic education was the key to everything they hoped to achieve.

At the same time, *Xinghui pian* illustrates that its authors and publishers had absorbed from their mentors in Japan much of the vocabulary and thematic concerns common to Islamic modernists throughout the Islamic world. Significantly, whereas the Chinese title's relatively ambiguous verb-object phrase *xinghui* could be rendered as "awakening Islam" or as "awakening the Muslims (of China)," its Arabic title, *Istiqaz al-Islam*, signified more clearly "the awakening of Islam" as a whole.[91] Indeed, the topics discussed in *Xinghui pian* would have been familiar to Islamic modernists anywhere: education, "religious reform" or "religious progress" (*zongjiao gailiang, zongjiao jinhua*), and "Islamic civilization" (*huijiao zhi wenming*). The problems raised in *Xinghui pian*, especially education reform, would continue to dominate Chinese Muslim periodicals into the 1930s, 1940s, and beyond.[92]

In addition to these broad themes, *Xinghui pian* also evinced a more specific ideological priority found among Islamic modernists elsewhere: an emphasis on the oneness of God, the correction of errors, and the negation of superstition. In an article titled "The Relationship between Religion and Education," the Chinese Muslim Tokyo student Huang Zhenpan declared that "(The Prophet) Muhammad was the first religious reformer in the history of the world…Western histories recount how he spread his teaching with lightning speed, and established a true monotheistic religion (*du yi wu er de zongjiao*)." Huang went on to address certain errors concerning the founding of Islam, including the notion that early Muslims were

[91] Ahmad Fadali, an Egyptian living in Japan, had suggested the Arabic title, according to Wen, "Mediated Imaginations," pp. 131-36.

[92] Zhao Zhongqi, "Lun zhongguo huijiao zhi guomin jiaoyu [On Chinese Islamic Citizen Education], *Xinghui pian*; Zhao Zhongqi, "Zhongguo huijiao zhi laili [The Historical Origins of Chinese Islam]," *Xinghui pian*; Huang Zhenpan, "Huijiao zhi wenming [Islamic Civilization]," *Xinghui pian*.

excessively violent or opposed to reform, or that "superstitions" (*mixin*) from the Arabian Peninsula had played a role in Islam's formation. Huang asserted that these were not his personal views, but the "common consensus of the world across all ages" (*tianxia wanshi zhi suo gong*).[93] Like education reform, nationalism, progress, and civilization, notions of doctrinal correctness and of Islam's rationalism were shared by Islamic modernists everywhere, and would increasingly preoccupy modernist Chinese Muslims in the years to come.

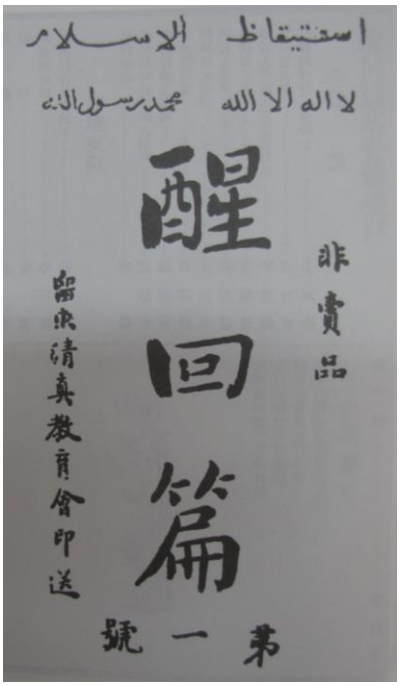

IMAGE 1. Cover of *Xinghui pian*. The Muslim testament of faith (*shahada*), "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God," appears under the Arabic title. The cover also notes that this publication is "not for sale." Source: *Huizu dianzang quanshu*.

Leading Chinese Muslims resumed their westward sojourns in the following decade. In the 1910s, Da Pusheng (1874-1965), a colleague of Wang Kuan at Niujie eventually known as one of modern Chinese Islam's "Four Great Imams" (*sida ahong*), ventured to Southeast Asia,

[93] *Xinghui pian*, p. 8.

South Asia, and the Middle East, staying abroad for most of 1916-17.[94] One of Da's reflections on his travels combined issues that had originally appeared in Wang's letter to Sultan Abdülhamid II and in *Xinghui pian*:

> My travels to Egypt, Arabia, and India left a deep impression of the spirit of Islam in those countries. With regard to the true meaning of our faith [*wu jiao zhenti*], every interpretation is supported by a considerable body of works that could be used to propagate Islam's ways and teachings [*xuan dao chuan jiao*]. I felt ashamed for having only a superficial knowledge, and did not want to carry out my research carelessly.[95]

Wang, the Tokyo group, and Da all expressed the sentiment that Chinese Muslims needed to grow in knowledge, with Wang and Da further suggesting that Chinese Muslims' collections of Islamic texts were far inferior to those of Muslims outside China. The difference from Wang to the Tokyo group and especially to Da is that the latter two placed greater emphasis on the need for doctrinal correctness, as well as the need to actively propagate that correct Islam (remember this for Chapter Two). Da—speaking about the 1910s, but writing in the late 1930s—had come to feel that the purpose of connecting with Islam and Muslims outside China was not to obtain willy-nilly whatever works Middle Eastern authorities were willing to send, but rather to identify the subset that contained the "true meaning" of Islam. After returning to China, Da and his associate Ha Decheng (1885-1943), remembered as another of the "Four Great Imams," established the Shanghai Islamic Teacher's Training School in the mid-1920s.[96] Similar institutions were established elsewhere in the same period, including the Chengda Academy

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[94] Da filled in as imam of Niujie while Wang Haoran was abroad. After Wang returned, he made Da headmaster of his new-style madrasa at Niujie. Da Jie, "Da Pusheng ahong zhuanlue [Brief Biography of Imam Da Pusheng]," *Zhongguo musilin* 1 (1984): pp. 19-20.

[95] Da, *Yisilan liushu*, pp. 8-9.

[96] Da, "Da Pusheng ahong zhuanlue," p. 21.

(*Chengda shifan xuexiao*) in Jinan, Shandong, and later Beijing; Mingde Upper School (*Mingde zhongxue*) in Kunming, Yunnan; the Wanxian Islamic Normal (*Wanxian yisilan shifan xuexiao*) in Wanxian, Sichuan; the Jiejin Upper School (*Jiejin zhongxue*) in Changsha, Hunan; and the Chongshi Upper School (*Chongshi zhongxue*) in Shanxi.

Modernist Chinese Muslim textual transnationalism expanded steadily from this point on, including the formation of new institutions, the establishment of new periodicals, and the importation of new texts (or newly accessible old ones). In the process, it came to embody the priorities articulated by figures such as Wang, the Tokyo group, and Da Pusheng, though in a gradual and circuitous manner. For example, Wang Jingzhai (1879-1949) of Tianjin, another of the "Four Great Imams," studied at al-Azhar in Cairo in the 1920s, but this appears not to have imparted a rigid sense of Arabo-centrism: after returning to China, he continued translating Persian works into Chinese into the late 1920s.[97]

Materially speaking, powerful Chinese Muslim patrons drove the expansion of Chinese Muslim modernist institutions and periodicals as well as the importation of texts. First and foremost, the Ma warlords of the Northwest lent decisive material and moral support to key Islamic modernist institutions in both the coastal regions and the Northwest frontiers. Descended from the Muslim militarists who had turned on the Muslim rebels and defected to the Qing during the late nineteenth-century uprisings, the Ma clan ruled Ningxia and Qinghai virtually autonomously and dominated much of Gansu, Inner Mongolia, and Xinjiang as well during the late Qing and Republican eras. These figures, particularly Ma Fuxiang (1876-1932), established their own privately funded Muslim schools across the Northwest, which, unlike the traditional system, taught both Chinese and Arabic.[98] Ma Fuxiang's family also supported the

[97] Tawadu' (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, pp. 82-83.

abovementioned Chengda Academy, the Republican era's leading Islamic modernist institution, founded in 1925 in Shandong but moved to Beijing after the Japanese invasion of Shandong in 1928. Through Ma's good offices, Chengda came to receive direct support from the GMD government as well, via the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission (*Meng-Zang weiyuanhui*), on which Ma served as deputy director from 1929-30 and director from 1930-31, as well as the Ministry of Education. Chengda trained young Chinese Muslims to be imams and instructors in new-style madrasas throughout China. It also published *Yuehua*, the preeminent Chinese Muslim modernist periodical, and counted among its faculty and affiliates many of the individuals responsible for importing both modern print media and classic Islamic texts.[99]

In addition to the warlords, mosque-merchant networks also lent considerable support to Chinese Muslim institutional development and textual importation efforts. Among these, the Muslim merchants of Shanghai, involved in pharmacy, furs, and other industries, played an especially important role. These figures sponsored the Chinese Muslim Hajj through Shanghai's Ximen Mosque. According to Yang Rongbin, when Da Pusheng and Ha Decheng set sail in 1916–17 in search of Islamic texts to bring back to China, they did so under the largesse of Ma Jinqing, a Shanghai Muslim businessman with South Seas connections. When they returned, many of the texts were translated and sold with the support of Xu Xiaochu, the Chinese Muslim manager of Shanghai's famous "Great Eastern Dispensary Ltd." (*Zhongfa yaodian*).[100]

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[98] The history of these schools is summarized in several chapters in Li Jieshun et al., eds., *Xibei huizu yu yisilan jiao* [*Islam and the Muslims of the Northwest*] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1993), Part V.

[99] Mao, "Muslim Educational Reform," pp. 157-59; Chinese Islamic Association, *Cheng de da cai: jinian chengda shifan chuangjian bashi zhounian xueshu yanjiu taohui lunwen huibian* [*Cultivating Morals and Developing Talent: Collected Research Essays Commemorating the Eightieth Anniversary of the Founding of Chengda Academy*] (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2005).

[100] Yang Rongbin, *Minguo shiqi shanghai huizu shangren qunti yanjiu* [*Research on the Republican-Era Shanghai Muslim Merchant Community*] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2015), pp. 55-63.

The remainder of the period before the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45) saw Chinese Muslim periodicals established in most major urban centers. *Yuehua* published a detailed survey of this expansion from 1908 to 1936,[101] summarized in the following chart:

TABLE 1. Major Chinese Muslim Periodicals, 1908-36.

Date Est.	**Chinese Title and Meaning**	**Arabic Title and Meaning**	**Location**	***Yuehua*'s Notes**	**Additional Notes**
1908	*Xinghui pian* (Awakening Islam/Muslims)	*Istiqaz al-Islam* (Awakening Islam)	Tokyo	One issue only	Published by Chinese Muslim Tokyo Pure and True Study-Abroad Educational Society
1915	*Qingzhen yuebao* (Pure and True Monthly)	--	Yunnan	Short-lived	Resumed in 1929 as *Qingzhen duobao*
1926	*Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan* (Chinese Muslim Study Society Monthly)	*al-I'lam* (Spreading Knowledge)	Shanghai	Continued as *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui jikan* in 1927; ceased in 1929	Da Pusheng a frequent contributor; Ha Decheng lectures also published; Wang Mengyang and Zhao Zhenwu (Zhao Bin) also frequent contributors
1927	*Yi guang yuebao* (Light of Islam Monthly)	*Nur al-Islam* (Light of Islam)	Tianjin		Wang Jingzhai, editor: this journal's Arabic title was identical to the journal of al-Azhar, where Wang had studied in the 1920s, but the latter was only established in 1930
1928	*Tianfang xueli yuekan* (Pure and True Principles Monthly)	N/A	Guangzhou		Ma Ruitu, editor

[101] Zhao's summary of periodicals: Zhao Zhenwu, "Sanshi nian lai zhi zhongguo huijiao wenhua gaikuang [Cultural Conditions of Chinese Islam over the Past Thirty Years]," *Yuehua* 8.23 (1936), pp. 3-7. See also Rudolf Löwenthal, *The Religious Periodical Press in China* (Peking: The Synodal Commission in China, 1940).

1929	*Qingzhen duobao* (Alarum of the Pure and True)	*al-Munabbih al-Islami* (The Islamic Awakener)	Yunnan	Continuation of the short-lived *Qingzhen yuebao* (Pure and True Monthly) established in 1915	Continuation of Yunnan's short-lived *Qingzhen yuebao*, published beginning in 1915
1929	*Yuehua* (Crescent China; pun on "moonlight")	*Nadarat al-Hilal* (Youth of the Crescent)	Beiping (i.e. Beijing during the Nanjing Decade)	Published once every ten days	Zhao Zhenwu, managing editor; most major urban coastal *ulama* contribute
1930	*Chengda xueshenghui yuekan* (Chengda Academy Student Association Monthly)		Beiping	Short-lived; became *Chengshi yuekan* in 1934; became *Chengshi xiaokan* in 1936	
1931	*Yisilan xuesheng zazhi* (Islamic Student Magazine)		Shanghai		Published by Da Pusheng's Shanghai Islamic Teacher Training School
1931	*Zheng dao zazhi* (The Straight Path Magazine)		Beiping	Short-lived	Published translations and summaries of Ahmadiyya tracts; also published on scientific topics
1933	*Xibei* (The Northwest)		Beiping	Later became *Xibei zhoubao*	Publication of Sun Shengwu's Beijing-based Xibei gongxue school
1933	*Tianshan yuekan* (Tianshan Monthly)	*Chini Turkistan Avazay* (Old Uyghur: Voices of Chinese Turkistan)	Nanjing		Named for the Tianshan Mountains. A publication of pro-state Uyghurs and their associates in Nanjing. Uyghur title later changed to "Tian Shan" in Arabic script.
1934	*Gaizao* (Reform)	*al-Islah*?	Shanghai	Short-lived	Publication of Fu Tongxian; not extant

1934	*Tujue* (Surge Forward)		Nanjing		Overtly pro-state
1934	*Rendao* (Humanism)		Shanghai		
1935	*Chenxi* (Dawn's Light)		Nanjing	Published monthly	Overtly pro-state
1936	*Huijiao qingnian yuebao* (Muslim Youth Monthly)	*Shabab al-Islam* (Youth of Islam)	Nanjing		Moved to Lanzhou in late 1930s
1936	*Funü zazhi* ((Muslim) Women's Magazine)		Shanghai		

TABLE 2. Geographical distribution of Chinese Muslim periodicals, 1908-36.

City	**Number of Publications**	**Number of Publications Lasting beyond One Issue**	**Notes**
Beijing/Beiping	21	13	
Shanghai	8	2	
Nanjing (incl. Luhe)	6	2	One of these, 回教青年月报, moved to Lanzhou
Yunnan	5	2	
Tianjin	3	3	
Guangzhou	3	1	
Zhenjiang	2	?	
Henan (incl. Kaifeng)	2	?	
Changde	2	?	
Qinghai	2	?	
Tokyo	1	0	
Xi'an	1	1	
Guilin	1	?	
Liaoning	1	1	"Second volume published in Shaanxi"
Shenyang	1	?	
Tai'an	1	?	
Nanning	1	0	
Hankou	1	0	

Hong Kong	1	1	
TOTAL	63	26+	

Several observations immediately stand out. First, modern Muslim publishing in China got off to a somewhat gradual start, but accelerated in the late 1920s and 1930s, coinciding with the reunification of the country under the GMD. Second, although the earliest publication came from Tokyo, and others from important Muslim centers in Yunnan (see below), the general rule was that coastal cities dominated Muslim publishing, as they did in Chinese publishing generally, with Beijing and Shanghai leading the way (after excluding short-lived publications, Beijing's dominance becomes even clearer).[102] Most of these publications were linked to important mosques (for example, Niujie and Dongsi in Beijing, and Ximen and Xiaotaoyuan in Shanghai). Third, relatedly, traditional inland Muslim centers such as Xi'an and Kaifeng were not particularly productive, given the lower degree of technological penetration there. On the other hand, in addition to Yunnan, certain other Muslim frontier strongholds did become centers of reform-minded Muslim publications—most notably Xining, Qinghai, under the rule of Muslim warlord Ma Bufang. Fourth, the new capital Nanjing eventually became the third most productive locale for Muslim publishing. It emerged late as an additional center of explicitly pro-state Muslim periodicals beginning in 1934, at a time when many leading Muslims had already long been serving in the government, and when their community stood to benefit considerably from showcasing such "contributions."

Crucially, the fact that most modernist Chinese Muslim publications were located in the coastal cities intensified Chinese Muslims' dialogue both with "China" (the state and leading

[102] See especially Christopher Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876-1937* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

Han intellectuals) and, through the maritime connections linking those cities to Singapore, Hong Kong, and beyond, with Islamic networks far beyond China. Indeed, along with the firmly pro-state stance of the Ma warlords, this may be the basic material fact that most readily explains the dual "transnationalist" and "integrationist" character of Chinese Islamic modernism. The concentration of publishing activity in Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Guangzhou ensured that the Republican-era Chinese Muslim press would reflect the trends and habits of the Han press and engage with the Han in a more direct manner than the Han Kitab generation. At the same time, however, Chinese Muslim publications also took cues from Muslim publications imported at those same locales, in terms of format and topics regularly covered.[103]

The immediate result of Chinese Muslim publishing's consolidation in the urban coastal regions was, again, not a unidirectional path toward Arabization, but fluid simultaneous engagement with multiple actors, regions, languages, events, and modes of thought.[104] Amidst

[103] Masumi Matsumoto, "Rationalizing Patriotism among Muslim Chinese: The Impact of the Middle East on the *Yuehua* Journal," in Stéphane A. Dudoignon, Komatsu Hisao, and Kosugi Yasushi, eds., *Intellectuals in the Modern Islamic World: Transmission, Transformation, Communication* (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 137-62.

[104] One of the earliest Chinese Muslim periodicals after *Xinghui pian* was an apparent exception to the concentration of print media in the coastal cities. This was Yunnan's *Qingzhen yuebao*, founded in 1915 and reestablished in 1929 as *Qingzhen duobao* after a decade-long hiatus. By this time, Yunnan had emerged as a center of Islamic knowledge production, including in Arabic. The publishers and authors of *Qingzhen yuebao*/*duobao* were the intellectual descendants of Ma Dexin, a Muslim tea merchant from Dali who made the Hajj in the mid-nineteenth century, set down in his *Chaojin tuji* (*A Record of the Hajj*; see Chapters Four and Five). *Qingzhen duobao* published Ma's Quranic exegesis, *Kelanjing zhijie*, in a serial beginning in its first issue in 1929.

Despite lying quite far inland, however, Yunnan's unique position on the southbound trade routes, extending through the jungle to Burma, Thailand, India, Malaysia, and so on, meant that it in fact was tied into the same maritime system of exchange as Hong Kong or Shanghai—and at a point more proximate to Muslim-majority regions. Accordingly, *Qingzhen duobao* was one of the earliest Chinese Muslim periodicals to publish news on current conditions in multiple Muslim countries and regions including Afghanistan, the Dutch East Indies, India, Syria, and Turkey. In April 1929, it also published an article on "the Arabs of the South Seas." In 1929, *Qingzhen duobao* published a series of articles on "education reform and Islam." Around the same time, the future Chinese Azharites Ma Jian and Na Zhong began writing for it, as did Zhao Zhenwu, the editor of *Yuehua* (see below).

Benite, "Taking 'Abduh to China," pp. 249-67; Ma Dexin s, *Chaojin tuji* (n.p. 1864); Ma Fuchu yigao, "Kelanjing zhijie [Clear Explanation of the Holy Quran]," *Qingzhen duobao* 2.1- (1929-30); *Qingzhen duobao* 2.4, 2.6; Zhao Bin, "Zhu ci san [Congratulatory Poem No. 3]," *Qingzhen yuebao* 1/4 (May 1915), p. 5; Zhao Bin, "Baihua xiangjie yimani fuzhu xuyan [Prefatory Statement Regarding the Use of Ordinary Chinese to Explicate Issues of Belief]," *Qingzhen yuebao* 1/4 (May 1915). The last article by Zhao was a discussion of the use of ordinary Chinese (*baihua*), rather than classical Chinese (*guwen*), to address issues of Muslim belief (Ar. *al-iman*; Ch. *yimani*).

the bustling print capitalist culture of Beijing, Shanghai, and elsewhere, Chinese Muslim textual transnationalism became more transnational, and Chinese Islamic modernism became more modernist. We could even say that Chinese Muslim periodicals both became more Chinese, if that is taken to mean sharing certain social spaces, a certain common knowledge of "current events," a certain sense of participating in and witnessing national and interational politics, and certain vocabularies and aesthetics tied to the print media form. Chinese Muslim publications in the 1920s and early 1930s entered into a more intense and plural dialogue with Han intellectual trends, Orientalist and missionary knowledge, and Islamic thought from outside China. With this, Chinese Muslims' calls for reforming Islam, concerned primarily with questions of doctrine and curriculum, expanded into a more fully *modernist* Islamic modernism interested also in broader questions such as Islam and science, Islam and women's rights, Islam and representative political systems, Islam's role in human history, and so on.

Several Chinese Muslim publications arose in Shanghai, China's main center of print media, commerce, and intellectual exchange. One of the earliest was *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan* ("Chinese Islamic Study Society Monthly," though calling itself *The China Muslim* in English).[105] Its Arabic title was *al-I'lam*, perhaps best understood in this context to mean "spreading knowledge"; the Arabic subtitle further described it as an "intellectual, literary, and religious publication of the Chinese Islamic Study Society." Imam Da Pusheng was a frequent contributor, as were others who would later write for *Yuehua*.

On one level, *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan* exemplified the multiregionalism of urban Chinese Muslim print media, publishing multiple articles about Egypt, Java, Johor, Turkey, and

[105] *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan* (1926-29). This was funded partly by Chinese Muslim medical institution: the Tianfang zhongyi yuan.

Delhi.[106] At the same time, however, it edged Chinese Muslim print media further toward political integrationism and Arabo-centrism. Like many Chinese Muslim publications both before and after it, *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan* maintained a particular interest in the question of the translation of the Quran (see below), serving as both a publisher of translated Quran excerpts and as a forum where the debate over Quran translation played out.[107] In the foreword to the first issue, the editors stated that the translation of the Quran into Chinese was one of the two most important tasks facing Chinese Muslims, and conceded that the task remained as yet incomplete due to linguistic challenges and to the fact that the original was the "language revealed by God" (*zhenzhu qishi zhi wen*).[108] The drive to translate the Quran in its entirety should not necessarily be seen as contradicting the gradually increasing Arabo-centrism of publications such as *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan*, for both Arabo-centrism and emphasis on comprehending the Quran were symptoms of the larger quest for "correct" belief. Quran translation also carried integrationist implications, for it made the core text of Islam legible to anyone who could read Chinese, Muslim or non-Muslim.

In addition, *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan*'s version of multiregionalism still reflected a quest for "correct" belief. Unlike certain other Chinese Muslim publications at the time, it did not exhibit influence from the Ahmadiyya or other allegedly heterodox movements; rather, it privileged voices claiming to represent Islamic modernism. Significantly, it also contained the

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[106] *Zhongguo huijiao yuekan* [multiple issues].

[107] Jin Chuqing, "Gulanjing hanyi zhi shangque [The Debate over the Chinese Translation of the Quran]," *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan* 1/6 (June 1926), pp. 13-14; Jin Ji, "Ba Zhao jun Zhenwu lun yi gulanjing shang Wang Jingzhai ahong shu [Addendum to Mr. Zhao Zhenwu's Discussion of Imam Wang Jingzhai's Translation of the Quran]," *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan* 1.6 (June 1926), pp. 14-17; Tian Zhen, "Gulanjing hanyi zhi xuanyan [A Declaration Regarding Chinese Translation of the Quran]," *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan* 1.6 (June 1926), pp. 17-18.

[108] "Fa kan ci [Foreword]," *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan* 1.1 (January 1926), p. 5.

kernel of greater Arabo-centrism, devoting more attention than earlier Chinese Muslim publications to the unique role of the Arabs in Islamic history, as well as the role of Arabic in the institution of orthodoxy. In fact, according to the foreword to the first issue, the other most important issue confronting Chinese Islam besides translation of the Quran was the "deficiency of propagation" (*xuanchuan quefa*) of correct beliefs in China, as opposed to heterodox or superstitious ones. The publication bore the stamp fo Da Pusheng. In the beginning, it explained, Islam had been brought to China by the Prophet's maternal uncle, Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas, who traveled to Guangzhou by sea. In subsequent generations, however, the great distance between China and Arabia, and the relatively proximity of Persia, meant that Persians "altered the nature of Islam in China," and that "China's Muslims began studying in the Persian language…and use of Arabic books became more specialized and infrequent." The fact that Muslims needed to study Chinese in order to go about their daily life, it said, further contributed to the relative marginalization of Arabic.[109] Although the publishers did not quite say it outright, the implication was clear enough that revivifying Chinese Islam required reversing the dominance of Persian over Arabic.

The establishment of *Yuehua* in 1929 by Chengda Academy represented the culmination and elaboration of many of the trends contained in *Xinghui pian*, *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan*, and other similar publications.[110] Chengda's headmaster was Ma Songting (1895-1992), the youngest of the "Four Great Imams," and its dean was Tang Kesan (1882-1950). Ma and Tang coordinated with the warlord Ma Fuxiang and later with his son Ma Hongkui, each of

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[109] *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan* [*Chinese Islamic Study Society Monthly*] a.k.a. *al-I'lam* [*Spreading Knowledge*] a.k.a. *The China Muslim*, 1/1 (Rajab 1344/January 1926), pp. 5-6.

[110] Matsumoto, "Rationalizing Patriotism"; Matsumoto, "Completion of the Idea of Dual Loyalty."

whom served as chair of Chengda's board, to keep financial support flowing. This relationship was eased by the fact that Tang Kesan also worked as a deputy of Ma Fuxiang in the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission (see Chapter Two).[111]

Yuehua was Chengda's most important cultural product. It aspired to be the leading voice representing all the Muslims of China. In Arabic, *Yuehua* called itself *Nadarat al-hilal* ("Youth of the Crescent"), and described itself as "a journal of religion, science, society, and morals." Established two years after the consolidation of the GMD government at Nanjing, *Yuehua* represented a new phase in Chinese Muslim publishing in which efforts to connect with the outside Islamic world and Muslims' support for the government both intensified. The publication's state objectives suggest how this duality was not viewed as a contradiction:

1. To implement Islamic doctrines consistent with modern [*xiandai*] trends;
2. To introduce news about Muslims [*huimin*] in other parts of the world;
3. To improve awareness of Muslims in China [*zhongguo huimin*] and improve their status;
4. To clear up misunderstandings between the New and Old Teachings;
5. To strengthen a conception of the nation-state (*guojia guannian*) among Muslims in China;
6. To promote education and a better livelihood for Muslims in China.[112]

The first two goals clearly require contact with the Islamic world outside China. The first states in so many words that the *ulama*, authors, instructors, and students associated with *Yuehua* and Chengda sought to import Islamic modernist thought—without explicitly acknowledging that it was imported, or from where. The second, introducing news about Muslims elsewhere, served multiple purposes: overcoming Chinese Muslims' isolation, identifying authoritative sources of "correct" belief, and (perhaps more debatably) studying the conditions of Muslim communities

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[111] Mao, "Muslim Educational Reform."

[112] *Yuehua* 1.1; originally translated in Mao, "Muslim Educational Reform," p. 157 (I have made only minor adjustments).

across multiple new Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority nation-states in order to anticipate by analogy what their own fate in China would be. The third goal operated on both Islamo-centric and Sino-centric levels: Chinese Muslims wanted Muslims elsewhere to be aware of their situation because improved connections would in turn support the first goal of improving Islamic knowledge and practice in China, and they also wanted non-Muslim Chinese to be aware of their history so as to mitigate intercommunal conflict. The fourth goal (reconciling the New and Old Teachings) is the most encoded: it refers to the modernists' argument that doctrinal differences between the Jahriyya and Khufiyya Sufi brotherhoods were to blame for outbreaks of violence across the northwestern frontiers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[113] According to the thinking of the *Yuehua* group (and coastal Muslim elites and their supporters generally), if such differences could be explained away or shown to rest on unacceptable foundations, such violence would not return and Chinese Muslims would be able to live in peace with their non-Muslim neighbors. The fifth goal ("strengthening Muslims' conception of the nation-state") speaks clearly to *Yuehua*'s pro-state stance, whereas the sixth (education reform), while superficially positive, would also serve to incentivize Muslims' integration into Chinese society.

In the 1930s, several new Muslim periodicals were established in the capital Nanjing, and several more were established whose titles contained the term *Xibei* ("the Northwest"). Among these, *Chenxi* and *Tujue* were dedicated to showcasing Muslim accomplishments such as the expansion of education or their participation in the GMD government. *Xibei* was published by the Beiping-based Xibei gongxue, whose headmaster was the prominent Muslim official Sun Shengwu. *Tianshan*, meanwhile, concerned itself especially with issues related to Xinjiang.

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[113] Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, Chs. 4-5.

Huijiao qingnian is a particularly interesting case: founded by the Chinese Muslim government official Wang Zengshan (see Chapters Four and Six) in Nanjing in 1936, its inaugural issue listed Chiang Kai-shek, Lin Sen (honorary president of the Republic), Sun Fo (son of Sun Yat-sen), Wang Shijie (minister of education), Ma Liang (a Muslim general from Liaoning), Masud Sabri (a Uyghur MP in the GMD government), and Wang Zengshan himself as members of its board. *Huijiao qingnian* advocated that "Muslim youths," after being trained in new-style schools, move to the frontiers to spread both modernist Islam and Chinese patriotism. Not only this: by 1940, when it could have retreated to Chongqing with the government, the periodical had instead relocated to Lanzhou, the capital of Gansu Province, to make good on its support for GMD goals on the northwestern frontiers. The first article in its first issue post-relocation was an inspirational wartime message from Chiang Kai-shek to China's Muslims that cited Quran and Hadith in the context of fighting the enemy, Japan. After its move, *Huijiao qingnian* published multiple pro-government articles in Arabic and Uyghur, hoping to reach its target audiences on the frontiers more effectively. Chapter Two will return to these issues.

Textual Transnationalism II: Multiregionalism and Arabization by Accident

A central but under-studied figure in the development of Muslim institutions and modern print media was ʻAbdullah Siddiq Zhao Zhenwu (a.k.a. Zhao Bin, 1895-1938) of Zhuoxian, Hebei Province. In *China and Islam*, Pang Shiqian praised Zhao as a "lifelong servant of Islamic learning."[114] More than any other individual, Zhao connected the figures, institutions, and trends of textual transnationalism, and embodied the circuitous path by which China's urban coastal

[114] Tawaduʻ (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*.

ulama and their lay associates came to emphasize the Arabic language and Islamic modernist thought over other languages and ideological orientations.

Zhao was educated at Beijing's Niujie Mosque under Wang Kuan and Da Pusheng. There he studied Arabic as well as Turkish with unknown instructors.[115] As a young student in the early 1910s, Zhao worked with Sun Shengwu (1894-1975; see Chapters Two, Four, Six) to support educational reforms at Niujie, bringing poor children into the madrasa to learn Chinese and Arabic. After his Niujie years, Zhao became increasingly involved in the educational and political structures of the Beiyang and GMD governments. At some point in the early years of the Republic, Zhao enrolled in the "Frontier Governance Department" at the Beijing Law College (*Fazheng zhuanmen xuexiao bianzheng xi*). After graduating, he went to the Altai region of Xinjiang, where his activities included conducting ethno-linguistic studies of the local Muslims.[116] He returned to Beijing in 1923. Growing in status, he was appointed as a lecturer in history at Yanjing University and as a civil servant in the Beijing Municipal Government. By 1926, he became a regular contributor to the abovementioned *Zhongguo huijiao xuehui yuekan* of Shanghai as well as to the similar Yunnanese publication *Qingzhen duobao*. In 1928 he was appointed instructor in Chinese and Islamic history at Chengda Academy.[117]

Zhao's career reached its pinnacle in October 1929 when he was appointed managing editor of *Yuehua*. Because editor-in-chief Sun Youming was rarely in Beijing, Zhao Zhenwu took charge of most of the paper's daily affairs and earned himself the nickname "housekeeper."

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[115] The Turkish instructor may have been Sa'id al-'Asali, according to research in progress by David Brophy.

[116] Zhao Bin [Zhenwu], "A'ertai zhi huijiao [Islam in the Altai Region]," *Yuehua* 2.3-2.10 (1930). Published also in *Qingzhen duobao* (1929.7).

[117] Most biographical details are from Wei Sheng, "Yi Zhenwu xiansheng [Remembering Mr. Zhao Zhenwu]," Yuehua 11/28-29-30 (1939), pp. 8-9.

Zhao wrote several series of articles for *Yuehua*. In 1932, he accompanied Ma Songting to Egypt to deliver the second study abroad delegation to al-Azhar (see Chapter Four). During that journey, in the early morning of 22 February, Zhao went with the Azharite Na Zhong to the Matbaʻat Sharikat al-Tamaddun al-Sinaʻiyya (the "Civilization Manufacturing Co. Press") to purchase a set of Arabic moveable type. Zhao specially marked the occasion in his travelogue, exclaiming "We succeeded in purchasing the Arabic type set, Praise be to God![118] After returning to China in 1933, he painstakingly inverted the type and carved new castings by hand in order to make more sets, making possible the spread of Arabic printing in China.[119] Thanks to Zhao, Chinese Muslims could now print in Arabic for the first time. With this, the potential to pursue *Yuehua*'s abovementioned objectives—implementing modernist doctrines, providing news about Muslims elsewhere, improving awareness of Muslims in China, disseminating "correct" beliefs, encouraging patriotism, and promoting education reform—increased dramatically, for it offered the opportunity to present those agendas to China's various Muslim communities in an aesthetically and substantively "authentic" manner.

Zhao's purchase of the Arabic type coincided with and facilitated a transformation in the format and aesthetic of *Yuehua*. In its first year, 1929-30, *Yuehua* looked like any Chinese newspaper, with multiple blocks of text spread across large pages. As it imported Muslim periodicals from outside China, however, it adopted the format of a journal or magazine, with a single field of text, or perhaps two or three columns, per page, beginning in its second year (1930-31). As time went on, its Arabic title and subtitle also became more prominent and

[118] Zhao, *Xixing riji*, p. 130.

[119] After the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of 1937, Zhao Zhenwu was ill and did not move south with Chengda. He stayed in Beijing. He died in 1938 at age 43.

stylized. Moreover, the contents of any given issue would include the latest installment in a senior imam's serial on doctrine (usually a translated or original exegesis of an important excerpt from Quran or Hadith), discussions of Islamic cultural or historical issues (also by prominent *ulama*), translations of and commentaries on major Islamic writings from outside China, translations of and commentaries on Orientalist writings (with particular attention to correcting their errors), editorials on important current events, answers to important questions of doctrine and practice (for example, prayer, diet, fasting, marriage, funerals, and so on), and news and correspondences from both the "Islamic world" and from Muslim communities around China. In other words, as it interacted with Muslim periodicals from outside China, *Yuehua* became more a publication of Islam, and less simply a publication about Islam.

In accordance with *Yuehua*'s stated priorities, one of Zhao's accomplishments as managing editor was to improve contact with Muslims abroad. Before setting off on his own travels of 1932-33, Zhao undertook this task by publishing notices in English in *Yuehua* and initiating correspondences with the editors of similar publications across the Islamic world. For the time being, eagerness to make contact with Muslims outside China outweighed insisting on Arabic as the language of outreach. Under Zhao, *Yuehua* used English to great effect in forging contacts with Muslims in British India, British Malaya and even the Netherlands East Indies. Their first English-language notice (April 1931) explained that *Yuehua* was

> an organ of Muslim[s]...which we beg to send...to all the brethren of the world. Regarding the social and religious condition of your area...we are very earnestly [sic] to have some information from your point, frequently, [e]specially any of your valuable periodical[s] and pamphlet[s].[120]

"All the brethren of the world," while hyperbolic in the literal sense, nevertheless signals that *Yuehua* saw value in contacting multiple Muslim regions, not just the Arab Middle East. A

[120] "Notice: Yueh Hwa Magazine," *Yuehua*, 5 April 1931.

subsequent issue announced, again exclusively in English, the receipt of letters "from every quarter of the world asking for...news of Chinese Muslim conditions [and the] addition of some sheets written in Arabian [sic] or English in Yueh Hwa."[121] The strategy was working: contact with Muslims outside China was on the rise. While use of Arabic in *Yuehua* increased in the mid-1930s, the editors apparently saw use of English as pragmatic, not unduly compromising to Islamic authenticity.

While Zhao's correspondences with foreign Muslims themselves are not extant (other than what was published in *Yuehua*), we do know which foreign publications *Yuehua* received as a result, because they were listed with volume information toward the back of each issue of *Yuehua* from 1931 to 1933 (Volume 3, Number 10 through Volume 5, Number 24). These periodicals, numbering thirty-six titles and over three hundred issues in total, vividly illustrate the contingency, eclecticism, and multiregionalism of Chinese Muslim textual transnationalism, but also the emerging overall trend in favor of Arabic and Islamic modernism.

TABLE 3. Foreign Periodicals Received by *Yuehua*, 1931-33, by Region of Origin[122]

Order Received	**Title**	**Quantity**	**Origin; Language; Publisher (if known)**
SOUTHEAST ASIA			
1	Pembela Islam	32	Bandung; Malay; Persatuan Islam
2	The Real Islam	6	Singapore; English; Hadramis
4	Het Licht	11	Batavia; Dutch; Jong Islamieten Bond
7	Soraia-Perdamaian	2	Makassar; Malay
8	Al-Huda	78	Singapore; Arabic; Arab community
18	Al-Kuwait & Al-Irakij	10	Java; Dutch
21	Al-Gisas	5	Singapore; Arabic; Arab community
26	Tentara	1	?; Malay?
27	Bangkok	1	?
28	Warta Melaya	1	Singapore; Malay; Hadramis and Malays
Totals	10	147	
BRITAIN, EUROPE, & RUSSIA			
3	Review of Religion	?	London; English; Ahmadiyya
6	"Why I Accepted Islam"	1	?; English; Ahmadiyya?

[121] "Notice," *Yuehua*, 25 May 1931.

[122] An earlier version of this table appears in John Chen, "'Just Like Old Friends': The Significance of Southeast Asia to Modern Chinese Islam," *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia (SOJOURN)* 31/3 (2016): pp. 694-95.

17	The Islamic Review	18	London; English; Ahmadiyya
19	Moslemische Revue	7	Berlin; German; Ahmadiyya
22	Slobodne Rijes	2	Yugoslavia; ?
34	Islamski svyet	9	Soviet Union; Russian; ?
Totals	6	>37	
SOUTH ASIA			
5	The Light	1	Lahore; English; Ahmadiyya
10 to 14	[Ahmadiyya tracts]	5	Lahore; English; Ahmadiyya
20	Jamia	1	Delhi; Urdu
Totals	7	7	
ARAB MIDDLE EAST			
9	Al-Fath	33	Cairo; Arabic; Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib
15	Al-Aalam	5	Tunis; Arabic
16	Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim	58	Baghdad; Arabic
25	Nur al-Islam a.k.a. Majallat al-Azhar	5	Cairo; Arabic; Sheikhs of al-Azhar
33	Umm al-Qura	15	Mecca; Arabic
35	Al-Hidaya	8	Baghdad; Arabic
Totals	6	124	
INDETERMINATE			
23	Al-Haqq	3	?; Arabic?
24	Young Muslim Magazine	1	?; English
30	Al-Shaban al-Muslimin	6	?; Arabic
31	Al-Mahdi	3	?; Arabic
32	Al-Tawhid	4	?; Arabic
36	Yapan Mohdiri	3	?; ?
Totals	6	20	
TOTALS	35	>335	

Again, measured through exchange of print media, the Arab Middle East was neither the first nor the decisively dominant region shaping Chinese Muslim thought about the Islamic world, even as late as the early 1930s. Instead, Zhao's overtures at first proved especially effective in making contact with Southeast Asian periodicals, which Zhao requested in exchange for copies of *Yuehua*. Ten of the thirty-five foreign publications received by *Yuehua*, and no fewer than five of the first eight, came from Southeast Asia. Significantly, both the number of titles and number of issues received from Southeast Asia exceeded that from the Arab world. Among them were *Pembela Islam*, of the Bandung Muslim modernist movement Persatuan Islam; *Het Licht*, of Batavia's Jong Islamieten Bond; and *The Real Islam*, of Singapore's Hadrami community.[123]

In addition to being received earliest and longest, Southeast Asian publications collected by *Yuehua* were especially consequential insofar as they laid the groundwork for Chinese Muslims to engage the Hadrami diaspora. Venerated figures of southern Yemeni origin who trace their ancestry to the Prophet, as indicated by their use of the title "Syed" (Arabic: *sayyid*), Hadramis began settling in Singapore in the early nineteenth century, not long after Sir Stamford Raffles' colonization of the island. Their patriarchs in this era were Syed Abdul Rahman Alsagoff (i.e. al-Saqqaf), Syed Sharif Omar bin Ali Aljunied (i.e. al-Junayd), and others.[124] They made fortunes in spices and real estate, intermarried with local royalty, maintained strong ties to Arabia and the Indian Ocean rim, and acted as trustees of the city's Muslim community through the institution of pious endowments (Arabic: *awqaf*). Their philanthropy focused on schools, mosques, hospitals, cemeteries and the Hajj.[125] Overall, the Southeast Asian Hadramis provide one example of how Arabic language and culture resonated far outside the Middle East. They are significant here, however, because they became political and cultural (and perhaps commercial) allies of the Chinese Muslim elites in multiple contexts, including but not limited to the GMD-sponsored Chinese Muslim wartime diplomatic delegations (see Chapter Four).

Even the first Arabic-language publication *Yuehua* received did not come from the Middle East, but from Southeast Asia. This was *al-Huda*[126] edited by A.W. Aljelany (i.e. 'Abd

[123] The image and theme of "light" cuts across several boundaries between Islamic movements and languages. *Het Licht*, *Nur al-Islam* i.e. *Majallat al-Azhar*, *The Light*, *Yiguang* (Wang Jingzhai), *Huiguang* (a Shanghai-based Japanese multilingual publication on Islam, with significant attention to India).

[124] Ma Dexin's *Chaojin tuji* states that he in fact met Syed Sharif Omar bin Ali Aljunied in Singapore in the 1840s (see Chapter Five).

[125] Ho, *Graves of Tarim*, 2006, p. 70. In 1939–40, the Hadramis were among the most powerful and welcoming constituencies to meet the Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation. See Chapter Four.

[126] *Al-Huda* is a Quranic term meaning "sound guidance" or "the well-guided path," and can serve as a modifier of the Quran itself, as in Quran 2:2: *Dhalika al-kitabu la rayba fihi hudan li-l-muttaqin* ("This is a book about which there is no doubt, a guide for the pious").

al-Wahid al-Jilani) of Haji Lane, a well-known street in Singapore's Arab quarter packed densely with local Muslim organizations of transnational reach. *Al-Huda* became the foreign publication received in greatest quantity by *Yuehua*. *Yuehua*'s receipt of *al-Huda* resulted from a personal connection: Aljelany had met Zhao Zhenwu and Ma Songting in Singapore on 15 December 1932, while the two were en route to Cairo, Jerusalem, and the Hijaz. Aljelany received Zhao and Ma warmly and even referred them to his father, who was working in Egypt and would meet them upon their arrival there (thanks to Aljelany's advanced notice to his father, the plan did indeed come to fruition).[127]

For those Chinese Muslims who could read it, *al-Huda* offered news from the Islamic world; the who's who of Singapore's Arab community; coverage of the controversy between Ahmad Surkitti's "reformist" Irsyad movement and the "traditionalist" Ba ʿAlawi sayyids; and reviews of other Southeast Asian periodicals, some of which the *Yuehua* editors could not themselves read.[128] *Al-Huda* gave particularly extensive attention to Southeast Asia's Hadramis. During Zhao and Ma's visit to Singapore in 1932-33, they were not granted a meeting when they attempted to visit Syed Ibrahim bin Omar Alsagoff (grandson of the patriarch). By the time the

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[127] Roff, *Bibliography of Malay Periodicals*, p. 39.

[128] "Pambala Islam," *al-Huda*, 22 February 1932, p. 5; "Al-Ustadh al-Surkitti," *al-Huda*, 4 April 1932; "Tarikh al-Irshad [History of the Irsyad Movement]," *al-Huda*, 25 April 1932, p. 13; "Radd al-Ustadh al-Surkitti ʿala al-Sayyid Ibrahim al-Saqqaf [Al-Surkitt's Response to Syed Ibrahim Alsagoff]," *al-Huda*, 9 May 1932, p. 3; "Editorial Notice," *al-Huda*, 24 October 1932, p. 6.

Another potential effect of *al-Huda* was to provide a glimpse of how Arabic-speaking Singaporeans viewed China and Islam in China. In its brief existence (1931–33), *al-Huda* also published a three-part feature entitled "Islam in China," which speculated on the origins of Chinese Islam while giving scant treatment to the thirteen hundred years that followed its arrival there, instead arguing that other than the few Muslims, "the Chinese do not have 'religion' as conventionally understood, but a mixture of philosophies into which enters a good deal of superstition." Clearly, Chinese Islam, more than China generally, held some novelty for Arab Singaporeans, and one could say that the determination subsequently shown by the Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation to educate its hosts was not altogether unjustified. "Al-Islam fi-l-Sin," 2 January 1933, p. 1; "Al-Islam fi-l-Sin (II)," 16 January 1933, p. 11; "Al- Islam fi-l-Sin (III)," 20 February 1933, p. 11. *Al-Huda* had also published a more obscure earlier article having to do with a Chinese Muslim: "Sini Muslim yubashshir bi-l-Islam [A Muslim Chinese Preaching Islam]," *al-Huda*, 20 June 1932, p. 10.

Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation met Syed Ibrahim in 1939-40, however, each side had learned considerably more about the other.

Chinese Muslims' turn toward Arabo-centrism and Islamic modernism in the early 1930s appears to have resulted from a controversy over the Ahmadiyya. Through Zhao Zhenwu's outreach efforts, *Yuehua* also came into possession of a number of Ahmadiyya publications from India, Europe, and Britain. The Ahmadiyya were a controversial Islamic movement founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian in the late nineteenth century; later, a second branch developed in Lahore. While the Ahmadiyya became highly influential for its widespread work in South Asia and Europe and its apologetic explanations of Islam, it was reviled by figures such as Rashid Rida due to its loose approach to matters of doctrine, its embrace of English and other non-Islamic languages, and above all, its founder's claim to be a new savior figure in Islam. Most of the Ahmadiyya publications *Yuehua* received were indeed written in English.[129] By this point, *Yuehua* had received relatively few publications in Arabic or from the Arab Middle East.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, a group of Beijing-based Chinese Muslims calling themselves the "Searching Academy" (*Zhuiqiu xuehui*, literally "Seeking Knowledge Study Society") published a set of translations of Ahmadiyya works into Chinese, including M. Manzur Ilahi's *The Muslim Catechism* and Maulana Muhammad Ali's *Islam: The Religion of Peace*.[130]

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[129] *Yuehua* also received copies of the Berlin-based German Ahmadiyya publication *Moslemische Revue*. Based on translated articles and citations appearing in *Yuehua*, it appears that the English-language publications, such as the London-based *Islamic Review* and *Review of Religion*, were the easiest for *Yuehua* authors to read. By contrast, there is little evidence that they were able to read the Malay- or Dutch-language materials they received from Southeast Asia, though they collected them all the same. The *Yuehua* editors and authors would theoretically have been able to get at least a sense for the contents of the Malay- and Dutch-language publications once they began receiving the Arabic-language *al-Huda*, published in Singapore, as this publication carried advertisements and summaries of *Pembela Islam* and *Het Licht*.

[130] *Musilin de qidao* [*Muslim Prayers*], translated by Zhuiqiu xuehui (Beiping: Qingzhen shubao she, n.d.); M. Manzur Ilahi, *Wen da* [*Questions and Answers*; originally *The Muslim Catechism*], translated by Zhuiqiu xuehui (Beiping: Qingzhen shubao she, 1930); Maulana Muhammad Ali, *Heping de zongjiao* [*Islam: The Religion of Humanity*], translated by Zhuiqiu xuehui (Beiping: Qingzhen shubao she, 1930).

The same group also published a monthly periodical that frequently quoted Ahmadiyya sources.[131] Far more remarkable than the mere existence of these translations is the fact that they were published by the Chinese Islamic Book Company (*Qingzhen shubao she*, literally "Pure and True Publishers") at Niujie Mosque, the birthplace of the Arabic revival under Wang Kuan and Da Pusheng.

As a whole, the list of foreign periodicals received by *Yuehua* from 1931 to 1933 forces us to reconsider the weight of the Arab world as against that of other Muslim regions in Chinese Muslim practices of textual transnationalism. A particularly conspicuous absence from that list is Rashid Rida's *al-Manar* (Cairo, 1898–1935), one of the most sustained, widespread and influential voices in the history of Islamic modernism (it is also an ironic absence given Rida's fierce polemics against the Ahmadiyya).[132] *Al-Manar* lacked an official circulation in China, and as Masumi Matsumoto notes, "there is no evidence that the contributors of the [sic] *Yuehua* subscribed to this journal."[133] *Al-Manar* does not appear among the periodicals that *Yuehua* received, despite its intimate involvement with the Muslim reformists across Malaya whose publications the Chinese Muslims possessed. In fact, *al-Manar* contains but one instance of direct contact with Chinese Muslims, in May 1930, when it published a fatwa request (*istifta'*) from Ma Ruitu, editor of *Tianfang xueli yuekan* (see above chart), with Riḍā's response.[134]

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[131] Zhuiqiu xuehui, *Zheng dao* a.k.a. *The Justice* (Beiping: Qingzhen shubao she, 1931-34). *Zheng dao* was directly connected to Zhao Zhenwu, though it is not entirely clear how, given that the "Searching Academy" members remained mostly anonymous. At least one advertisement for a book edited by Zhao Zhenwu and also published by the Qingzhen shubao she appeared in *Zheng dao* in October 1931.

[132] Interestingly, a Southeast Asian derivative of *al-Manar*, the Islamic modernist Kaum Muda's publication *al-Munir*, also does not appear on *Yuehua*'s list, even despite *Yuehua*'s relatively robust engagement with Southeast Asian periodicals. On *al-Munir* and the Kaum Muda, see Roff, *Origins of Malay Nationalism*.

[133] Matsumoto, "Rationalizing Patriotism," pp. 147-48.

[134] Muhammad Rashid Rida, "Risala muhimma min al-Sin fi hal man fiha min al-muslimin [An Important Letter from China on the Muslims Living There]," *al-Manar* (Muharram 1349 i.e. May-June 1930), p. 75. I am grateful to

In other words, just as Zhao Zhenwu's efforts to make contact with Muslim publications outside China did not focus exclusively on Arabic publications, they also did not single-mindedly seek out publications identifiable as Islamic modernist—this in spite of Zhao's studies with Wang Haoran and Da Pusheng. On the contrary: the presence of so many Ahmadiyya publications, and the glaring absence of *al-Manar*, vividly illustrate that Zhao's outreach project was highly uneven and eclectic, and—as he admitted in *Yuehua*'s English-language notice—aimed at connecting with any and all Muslim groups outside China. It was not inevitable that *Yuehua* would come to espouse Islamic modernism at the expense of movements such as the Ahmadiyya, or that it would come to place such a high value on the Arabic language.

Nevertheless, not long thereafter, a greater emphasis on Arabic language and Islamic modernism is precisely what came about, due largely to the Ahmadiyya controversy itself. In 1932, *Yuehua* published an article on this controversy by the Chinese Muslim scholar Hai Weiliang, then only twenty years old and studying at the Nadwat al-'Ulama in Lucknow. Hai wished to convey a "word of caution" to Chinese Muslims in China. The purpose of this admonition was to dissuade Chinese Muslims from relying on Ahmadiyya writings, and instead advocate greater attention to Islamic modernist thought produced in Arabic.[135] Hai sympathized with Chinese Muslims' impulse to reach "all the brethren of the world," but criticized the Ahmadiyya's heterodoxy nonetheless:

> Muslims in our country have long maintained a closed-door policy, having little contact with Muslims outside China, and understanding little of the situation in other countries…Upon seeing that a given book has something to do with Islam, they will regard it as a priceless treasure! While I respect their hard work and

Aaron Glasserman for pointing out that the author of the *istifta'* was Ma Ruitu. *Al-Manar* also published occasional coverage of China and Islam in China, often translated from European sources (see Introduction and Chapter Five).

[135] Hai Weiliang, "Jinggao guonei rexin jiaowu zhi tongbao [A Word of Caution to my Coreligionists at Home Who Eagerly Seek News of Islam Outside China]." *Yuehua* 4.6 (1932), 11-14.

> enthusiasm, I must alert them to a certain unnatural strain that is harming and polluting Islamic belief.[136]

Hai accused the Ahmadiyya of promoting "sectarianism" (*zhipai zhuyi*) and compared its founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, to Martin Luther, citing his abandonment of the "original innate unity of Islam" (*huijiao xingben datong*). This failure to emphasize unity, Hai continued, had made the Ahmadiyya complicit in British imperialism.[137] Hai noted that in the late 1920s and early 1930s, a Beijing-based group of Chinese Muslims (i.e. the Searching Academy) had translated several Amhadiyya publications into Chinese. Hai appreciated their eagerness for contact with Muslims outside China, but could not accept their failure to prioritize unity and correct belief. In place of Ahmadiyya teachings, Hai urged his readers to study the "pan-Islamism" of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, which "fifty years ago empowered Muslims and struck fear into the British." He also referred them to "anti-Ahmadiyya" publications including *al-Manar*, *al-Rabitah al-Sharqiyyah*, and *Umm al-Qura*.[138]

There was a backstory to this. The evolution of *Zheng dao*'s contents and format demonstrate that Hai elected not to marginalize the publication, but to commandeer it in the service of an Arabo-centric Islamic modernist orientation. Hai had in fact managed to publish an

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[136] Hai, "Jinggao," p. 11.

[137] This line of reasoning echoed that of certain Islamic modernists, who remained skeptical of any identity that risked sowing divisions between Muslims, and who repeatedly assailed the Ahmadiyya in *al-Manar* and *al-Fath*, labelling it "Islamic messianism" (*al-masihiyya al-islamiyya*).

[138] Hai, "Jinggao," p. 13. Hai's article was one of the first in *Yuehua* to mention *al-Manar*. Scholarship on the Nadwat al-'Ulama makes clear that Hai would have been exposed to *al-Manar* and other similar Arabic periodicals during his time in Lucknow, where Nadwa scholars imported many such publications—just one component of their tremendous emphasis on the Arabic language as the sole legitimate vehicle for accessing Islamic knowledge. As Muhammad Qasim Zaman states, these included Mecca's *Umm al-Qura*, Damascus's *Fata al-'Arab*, Hajj Amin al-Husayni's *al-Jami'a al-Islamiyya*, and Rashid Rida's *al-Manar*, as well as *al-Hilal*, *al-Muqtataf*, *Majallat al-Zahra*, *al-Majma' al-'Ilmi*, *al-'Irfan*, and *al-Fath*. The purpose of these periodicals was not only to hone Nadwa students' linguistic skills, but also to provide a window onto "issues of Arab and Islamic identity, and…nationalism, secularism, and Islam." Zaman, p. 66.

anti-Ahmadiyya warning in *Zheng dao* itself, similar to the *Yuehua* one and a few months earlier than it.[139] Shortly thereafter—and shortly before Hai's warning essay appeared in *Yuehua*—the editors of *Zheng dao* published a notice in Chinese and English in which they cited evidence that the Ahmadiyya in India had claimed them as a branch organization, using this as a pretext to renounce the Ahmadiyya in the same breath:

> We are exceedingly surprised to note from an open letter signed by a certain Mr. Wu of Peiping in "The Light", vol. X, No. 41, November 1, 1931, a journal published in India in English, that our "Searching Academy" is stated as being one of their branches of the Young Moslem Society in Peiping and the four pamphlets of Chinese literature on religion published by us, as well as the piodical [sic], Cheng Tao "The Justice" which he wrongly quotes as "The right path" belong to their Society. You have probably noted that in the first issue of our "The Justice" an announcement was made that our "Searching Academy" is entirely an independent organization. We neither receive any allowance nor do we solicit for any contribution from anywhere for any purpose. It is surprising that such an is-statement [sic] has been made by Mr. Wu in "The Light", which is not only insulting but fraudulent. In order to call the attention of the public to this matter, this formal announcement is hereby made by the "Searching Academy" in addition to the warning which we made to Mr. Wu, that such an assertion is entirely baseless.[140]

The following month (January 1932), at the same time that Hai was preparing his *Yuehua* warning, he published an entirely normal article in *Zheng dao* 2/1—that is, one that was expository rather than critical or prescriptive.[141] He then published additional installments of this essay in 2/2 and 2/3, and new material in 2/4. Significantly, in 2/5, he published the first installment of a translation of Shakib Arslan's *Limadha ta'akhkhara al-muslimun wa limadha taqaddama ghayruhum* (*The Causes of Muslims' Decline, and of Others' Progress*, 1930), an

[139] Hai Weiliang, "Zhongguo huijiao jianglai yingyou de dongxiang [The Trend Chinese Islam Must Follow from Now On]," *Zheng dao* 1/7 (15 November 1931), pp. 221-28.

[140] I have not yet found extant copies of the relevant issues of *The Light*.

[141] Hai Weiliang, "Yindu hui yin jiaotu zai zhengzhi shang zhi jiufen [The Political Conflict between Muslims and Hindus in India]," *Zheng dao* 2/1 (15 January 1932), pp. 24-29.

Arabic pan-Islamic tract consistent with modernist values.[142] Finally, beginning with issue 2/7 (15 July 1932), *Zheng dao*, perhaps at Hai's suggestion, added an equivalent Arabic title, *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*—"the straight path," a modifier for Islam drawn from the Fatiha (Quran 1:1).

In short, the Arabo-centric and modernist turn in Chinese Muslim textual transnationalism came about almost entirely by accident, thanks to the brief but colorful Ahmadiyya controversy. Zhao Zhenwu, with the best of intentions, had been taking things in a completely different direction and teetering (allegedly) on the edge of "heterodoxy," until Hai Weiliang intervened from Lucknow (where he appears to have been the only Chinese Muslim at the time). From that point on, Zhao learned his lesson. From 1932 until his premature death in 1938, he became an instrument of modern Chinese Islam's Arabization and adoption of Islamic modernism. In December 1932, he and Ma Songting set out on a journey to the Middle East. On the way, they held meetings in Singapore, Cairo, Jerusalem, and the Hijaz—but, notably, not in India. In the process, they delivered the first group of Chengda Academy students to al-Azhar; made arrangements with al-Azhar and King Fu'ad I of Egypt to have two Azhar instructors sent to China, to teach Arabic and Islamic doctrine at Chengda; accepted a gift of Arabic Islamic texts from the king; collected instructional materials from al-Azhar to be used at Chengda; and made the abovementioned purchase of a set of Arabic moveable type.[143] The full consequences of these actions will become clear over the rest of this study.

The immediate result, however, was to consolidate the turn toward Arabo-centrism and Islamic modernism. From that point on, prioritization of the Arabic language and Islamic

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[142] Shakib Arslan, "Shijie huijiao minzu luohou zhi yuanyin [Reasons for the Backwardness of the World's Muslim Peoples, i.e. *Limadha ta'akhkhara al-muslimun wa limadha taqaddama ghayruhum*]," translated by Hai Weiliang, *Zheng dao* 2/5 (15 May 1932), pp. 130-36.

[143] Zhao, *Xixing riji*.

modernist thought increased dramatically at Chengda and on the pages of *Yuehua*. This shift was visible in several ways: the ongoing calls for stricter implementation of correct belief from senior imams such as Da Pusheng, the "doctrinal research" (*jiaoyi yanjiu*) efforts of Chengda Academy scholars and *Yuehua* authors, the abovementioned Arabization of *Yuehua*'s appearance, and *Yuehua*'s growing number of translations of Arabic-language Islamic modernist writings.

Curricular Reform: Continuity and Change in Chinese Madrasas

Again, education reform was a major concern for modernist Chinese Muslims. How did urban coastal Chinese Muslims' increasingly Arabo-centric and Islamic modernist priorities influence curricula in Chinese madrasas? How much did textual changes mirror the ideological shift?

By the 1930s, the madrasa curriculum—classic Islamic texts, and the manner of transmitting and engaging with them—increasingly differed between the Northwest frontiers and the urban coastal regions. Northwest frontier Sufis and urban coastal Muslims used some of the same texts, but these texts operated in completely different "Con-Texts" and involved differing practices of transmission and authority.[144] Moreover, even when texts used in the Northwest happened to coincide with those in the coastal regions, they would have largely arrived through contrasting routes. To be reductionist for the sake of clarity, one circulation was pre-modern and land-based, relying on caravan towns connecting to Central Asia, and the other was modern and sea-based, relying on port cities connecting the South China Sea and Indian Ocean rim.

Beginning in the late seventeenth century, Sufis sheikhs in the Northwest would transmit texts orally through memorization to a group of students, supplemented by a variety of ritual practices body movements.[145] Chanting was also common among some groups: the Jahriyya, for

[144] These themes draw on the arguments of Messick, *Calligraphic State*, and Ahmed, *What Is Islam*, Chs. 2, 4.

example, chanted sacred verses called *Mukhammas* based on the *Qasidat al-Burda* of the Egyptian poet Sharaf al-Din al-Busiri (d. 694AH/1296AD), as well as encomia of the Prophet called *Mada'ih*."[146] These verses are used by certain Chinese Muslims to this day, with large groups of men and/or women chanting in unison, following a lead vocalist.[147]

In terms of doctrinal and instructional materials, each Sufi brotherhood (Ar. *tariqa*; Ch. *menhuan*) in the Northwest accumulated its own set of texts over the four centuries since Sufism's arrival, depending on the experience of the imam.[148] The Huasi Gongbei of Hezhou (Linxia), for example, still possesses the texts Ma Laichi (1680s-1760s) and his eight generations of descendants collected beginning with Ma's journey to Mecca in the 1730s.[149] Among these are the *tafsir* (Quranic exegesis) *Ruh al-bayan*, by the Ottoman Naqshbandi Ismail Haqqi al-Bursawi (1063-1137AH/1652-1725AD); the Sufi masterwork *al-Futuhat al-makkiyya* ("Meccan Revelations"), by Ibn al-'Arabi (560-638AH/1165-1240AD); and the Prophetic genealogy *Mawlud al-nabi*. Huasi also possesses a number of significant objects such as Ma Laichi's *ijaza* granted in Mecca in the 1730s, a miniature black velvet "ka'ba cover" also brought back by Ma, and, even more remarkably, a scroll containing an complete miniature Quran claimed to have

[145] This image of "rote memorization" at the feet of a sheikh was itself to an extent an essentialization of Sufis and of traditional Muslim learning: part of the modernist polemic constructing such Muslims as conservative, irrational, traditionalist, and so on. Only so much generalization is possible about what Northwest Muslim textual practices actually were. Gesink, *Islamic Reform and Conservatism*, Chs. 3-4. See also Hefner and Zaman, *Schooling Islam*.

Jonathan N. Lipman, "Head-Wagging and the Sounds of Obscenity: Conflicts over Sound on the Qing-Muslim Frontiers," *Performing Islam* 3/1-2 (2014): pp. 45-59.

[146] Sobieroj, "Arabic Manuscripts on the Periphery."

[147] Examples can be viewed at SOAS "Sounding Islam in China" project: http://www.soundislamchina.org/.

[148] Michael Laffan narrates a very similar process for Java occurring at the same time: Michael Laffan, *The Makings of Indonesian Islam: Orientalism and the Narration of a Sufi Past* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2011), pp. 46-60.

[149] Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, pp. 64-72.

been produced by Abu al-Qasim bin Muhammad al-Junayd al-Baghdadi (220-298AH/835-910AD), a central figure in the chain of early Sufi masters.[150]

As the presence of the *Ruh al-bayan* suggests, the formation of the northwestern *menhuan* was shaped by the reformist currents of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Sufi (especially Naqshbandi) revival in the Ottoman lands, India, Yemen, and elsewhere. These Sufi influences from points south and west led to the emergence of a "New Teaching" (*xinjiao*) in Northwest China, which used new texts such as the *Ruh al-bayan* in conjunction with some much older Sufi classics such as Ibn al-'Arabi's *al-Futuhat*. Disagreements over ritual resulting from these developments brought schisms and violence among the Muslims of the Northwest, and also set them as a whole apart from the "Old Teaching" (*laojiao*) of the *gedimu* (from Arabic *qadimun*, the "ancient ones"), who claimed descent from the first Muslims to arrive in China.[151]

Meanwhile, in eastern China (and parts of Yunnan and Sichuan), the establishment of teacher-training schools such as Chengda Academy produced a drive toward standardization not witnessed in the Northwest. Centralized training of *ulama* eventually meant that students in a given town or village would no longer necessarily be taught only by the imam from that place, or use only the texts he had used.[152]

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[150] Information about Huasi is based on author's visit there in September 2015. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, also mentions some of these objects and texts as being held there. *Ruh al-Bayan* is known as a popular Sufi *tafsir* among Sunni scholars. The *Encyclopaedia of Islam* describes it as a Quran commentary with "at times original mystical interpretations." Günay Alpay Kut, "Ismail Hakki," *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam 2*; A. Ates, "Ibn al-'Arabi," *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam 2*; A.J. Arberry, "al-Djunayd," *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2.

[151] Fletcher, "The Naqshbandiyya in Northwest China"; Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, pp. 64-72.

[152] It was, of course, always a common practice for accomplished *ulama* to travel beyond their immediate locales once intellectual resources had been exhausted, and/or to seek out particular masters. This traditional pattern, however, did not enable the imposition of a single curricular vision from a single institution or set of institutions. By extension, one could argue that the mere formation of such institutions, regardless of what actually went on there, was an invitation for greater state supervision and regulation of "religion."

Before that standardizing turn toward Arabic language and Islamic modernism, however, the training of *ulama* in eastern China during the Qing and early Republic shared broad features in common with madrasas throughout Asia and Africa, and remained closer in style to the Northwest as well. Pang provides the following description in *China and Islam*:

> Some madrasas in China are very old, others new. Both types have elementary and advanced levels. Elementary schools are widespread; there is generally one attached to each mosque. These are attended by the Muslim children of a given area once they reach the age of four years, four months, and four days. First they learn to spell, then they study the meaning of the *shahada*: that there is no god but God, and that Muhammad is His prophet. Then they memorize the *Khatm al-Quran* prayer, the *Surat al-kahf*, and the *Kitab al-da'awat*…then they read some portions of the Noble Quran, and study the three Persian books, *al-Fasl*, *al-Mahammat*, and *'Umdat al-Islam*. The first of these is a treatise on *iman* and *'aqida*, and the second and third deal with the rules of worship. This course of study prepares students wishing to continue to the advanced stage…
>
> Advanced schools are to be found in some mosques. The costs are born by the community as a whole [*al-qawm ajma'in*]…Here students study etymology and morphology, derivation, and case inflection…
>
> These madrasas have no formal exams. The judgment of the *ahong* determines when a student has completed his studies and deserves his degree [*shahada*]. At this point the student will be given a special green robe and white head covering, and a two-meter by one-meter cut of red silk, on which is written the sciences in which he successfully completed his studies, as well as the areas where he distinguished himself in understanding and *ijtihad*. He is recognized by the entire Muslim community during Eid. After this, he will be known as *ahong*, or *'alim*. Imams do not receive a fixed salary, but receive donations from the community, especially on occasions such as weddings and holidays.[153]

Chinese Muslims divided Qing-era madrasa curricula loosely between the basic prayers and Arabic language at the primary level versus advanced Arabic grammar and substantive topics at the advanced levels. Students would often learn some Persian or Turkish as well before moving on to scripture, doctrine, law, and other genres. Importantly, Sufi influences and Turkic and Persian sources played a large role. Chinese Muslims' access to texts was constrained, however,

[153] Tawadu' (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, pp. 66-68.

by their physical distance from other Muslim societies, resulting in relatively fragmented textual collections, and by uneven Arabic abilities, resulting in a few key texts enjoying elevated status.

According to Pang, the following five works form the elementary course of study in the Arabic linguistic sciences of etymological discrimination (*al-ishtiqaq*), morphology (*al-sarf* or *al-tasrif*), derived word structures (*al-bina'*), case inflection (*al-i'rab*), and grammar (*al-nahw*):

(1) *Al-Ishtiqaq wa-l-sarf*, by Baha al-Din al-Kashgari
(2) *Al-Zinjani*, by Ibrahim bin ʻAbd al-Wahhab al-Zinjani
(3) *Al-'Aza*, by Hussein Faydullah al-Kashgari
(4) *Al-'Awamil*, by ʻAbd al-Rahman al-Jami, a work on *nahw*
(5) *Al-Misbah*, by Sheikh Hussein, a preacher in Kashgar, on *nahw*, and also including his *sharh* titled *Dau' al-misbah*.[154]

Pang then lists the following substantive works as constituting the advanced level of study:

(1) *Mullah Jami*, by ʻAbd al-Rahman al-Jami, on *nahw*
(2) *Talkhis al-bayan*, by al-ʻAllama Saʻd al-Taftazani[155]
(3) *Sharh al-wiqaya*, by ʻAbdullah bin Masʻud, on *fiqh*
(4) *Tafsir al-Baydawi*, by Nasir al-Din al-Baidawi
(5) *'Aqa'id al-Nasafi*, by Najm al-Din ʻUmar al-Nasafi[156]
(6) *Usul al-Shashi*, on *usul al-fiqh*
(7) *al-Khutab*, by al-Farisi, on *hadith*
(8) *Lamʻat*, by al-Farisi, on *tasawwuf* [i.e. Sufism][157]

Pang notes that the above books are collectively known as the "Thirteen Texts," and are studied in all advanced madrassas in China. He adds that the following may be studied as well:

(1) *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*, by al-Mahalli and al-Suyuti
(2) *Tafsir al-Nasafi*, i.e. the *'Aqai'd* of al-Nasafi and the accompanying *Sharh al-'aqa'id al-nasafiyya* by al-Taftazani

[154] Tawaduʻ (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, p. 68. Three additional sources (two by Chinese Muslims, one by recent scholars) provide information on the premodern Chinese Muslim curriculum. The first is Liu Zhi's list of sixty-seven works of Islam compiled in his *Tianfang xingli* (1704) and *Tianfang dianli* (1710); the second is Pang Shiqian, "Zhongguo huijiaosiyuan jiaoyu zhi yange ji keben" [Chinese Madrasa Education: Evolution and Textbooks] *Yugong* 7/4 (1937); the third is Leslie, Donald Daniel, Yang Daye, and Ahmed Youssef, "Arabic Works Shown to the 'Qianlong' Emperor in 1782," *Central Asiatic Journal* 45/1 (2001): pp. 7-27.

[155] Taftazani worked at the court of the Khans of the Golden Horde. "Al-Taftazani," *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2.

[156] Pang describes this as being "on *tawhid*."

[157] Tawaduʻ (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, p. 68.

(3) *Tafsir Hussein al-Farisi*, i.e. the *Tafsir-i Mawahib* by Husayn bin Ali al-Wa'iz-i Kashifi (d.910/1505)
(4) *Arba'un*, on *hadith*
(5) *Sharh Durr al-Mukhtar*, on *fiqh*, by Ibn 'Abidin (a.k.a. al-Shami)
(6) *Maqamat al-Hariri*, on Arabic literature (*adab*)
(7) *al-Mathnawi al-Farisi*, the famous magnum opus of Rumi.[158]

This curriculum was relatively narrow and eclectic compared to what one might find in the Middle East (though perhaps less so compared to madrasas in more remote regions). It also displayed abundant Turkic and Persian influences as well as an emphasis on Sufism. As was the case elsewhere in the Islamic world, many of these texts would lose ground in the twentieth century's new-style Chinese Islamic schools in favor of more standardized, and Arabo-centric set of texts approved by Islamic modernists. This process, however, unfolded unevenly: a number of texts, even some of Persian provenance, remained in the curriculum into the twentieth century.

The overall changes (or attempted changes) in Chinese madrasa curricula in the early twentieth century, however, are undeniable. Not only were Persian and Turkic texts increasingly marginalized, but the approach to learning Arabic was also modified through external influences. Modernist Chinese Muslims imported a new set of texts to teach the basics of proper recitation (*tajwid*), morphology (*sarf*), grammar (*nahw*), and reading (*qira'a*). Though in practice few students could achieve it, greater emphasis was placed on accurate pronunciation and trying to learn the Arabic language as native speakers learned it. For example, in the 1930s, Chengda Academy printed its own edition of *al-Qira'a al-rashida*, a multi-volume Arabic textbook published in 1931 by the Egyptians 'Abd al-Fattah Sabri Bey (a ministry of education official) and 'Ali 'Umru Bey (secretary-general of the Egyptian University, later Cairo University). Zhao Zhenwu received this and other textbooks on 17 January 1933 from a man identified only as

[158] Tawadu' (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, p. 69. Leslie, Yang, and Youssef also mention *Gulistan* and *Mirsad*.

"'Ali," who may have been the second of the two authors himself.[159] In eastern China, this would have been used as an advanced text given that its contents were entirely in Arabic. Crucially, this same textbook was increasingly used at this time to teach Arabic in India and Indonesia.[160]

Chengda's emphasis on Arabic thus increasingly resembled that of madrasas around the Indian Ocean, all of them under the pedagogical influence of Cairo. Chengda imported and translated dictionaries as well as textbooks. Imam Wang Jingzhai produced a Chinese translation of the Ilyas Arabic-English dictionary, and the standard encyclopedic dictionary *al-Qamus al-muhit* began to appear in Chinese Muslim book catalogs around the same time. Da Pusheng also became a producer of glossaries and grammars (see Chapter Two).

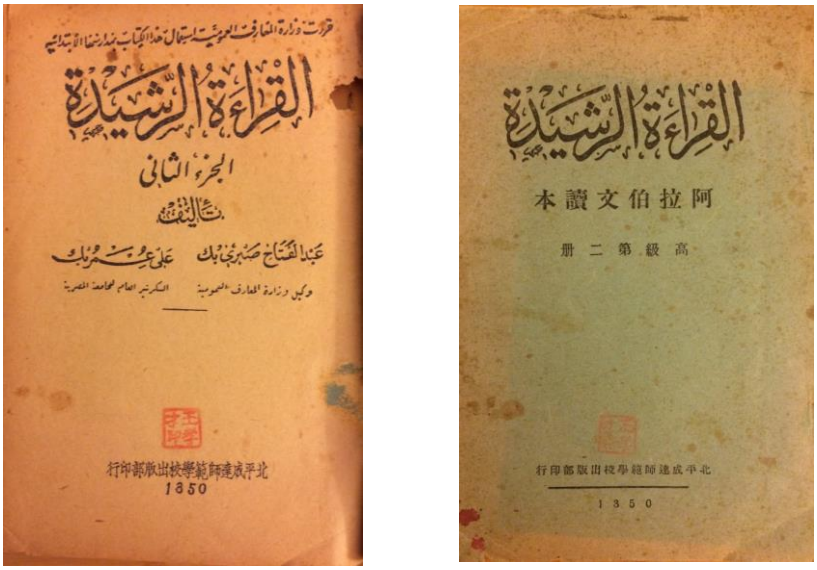

FIGURE 4. Cover and title page of the Chengda Academy edition of *al-Qira'a al-rashida* (1930s). From the author's collection.

Beyond textbooks, textual differences in the formal genres of Islamic knowledge between the coastal versus frontier regions also became more pronounced in the early twentieth century.

[159] Zhao, *Xixing riji*, p. 60.

[160] Zaman, "Arabic," p. 68. Zaman mentions that this text was used "throughout Indonesia."

The infrastructures of textual exchange were simply transforming much more rapidly in eastern China.[161] As with textbooks, the most important consequence of this process was that textual collections in Shanghai and Beijing came to resemble those of madrasas elsewhere in the greater Indian Ocean world (Java, Delhi, Cairo) more closely than they resembled those of the *menhuan* in the Northwest. The problem was that *ulama* in eastern China were not familiar with all the material they had brought in, and were overwhelmed by its volume—hence the need to learn more about these texts from Muslims abroad, especially from al-Azhar. The potential inherent in this project was clear, however: accumulating and mastering a more complete set of classic Islamic works than that held by frontier Muslims was crucial to the eastern *ulama*'s drive to claim claiming a more authentic knowledge of Islam than their northwestern counterparts.

Increasing access to a wider range of primarily Arabic texts prompted Chinese *'ulama* to undertake a new phase of translation and pedagogical reform that differed from earlier ones. In contrast to the more fragmented, Turkic- and Persian-influenced madrasa curricula of the Qing era, by the late 1920s and 1930s institutions such as Chengda and Shanghai Islamic Normal School enjoyed access to a greatly expanded collection of Arabic works in most of the major genres of Islamic knowledge, as evidenced in lists such as the Shanghai Chinese Islamic Bookstore's (*Zhongguo huijiao shuju*) "Ramadan sale" catalog (see FIGURE 5). This Shanghai catalog reflected a more complete subdivision of the revealed and transmitted Islamic sciences (*al-'ulum al-naqliyya*)—as opposed to the rational sciences (*al-'ulum al-'aqliyya*)—conforming to the system set forth in the tenth century by al-Khwarizmi (780-850) and revised thereafter by Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) in his *Muqaddima*: that is, (1) scripture (*mashaf*, i.e. the Quran) (2) Prophetic traditions (*hadith*) (3) exegesis (*tafsir*) (4) jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and (5) Sufism

[161] Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai*; Gelvin and Green, *Global Muslims*.

(*tasawwuf*); the Shanghai list also added a separate section for the doctrine of God's unicity (*tawhid*).[162] In addition, the Shanghai list included the major categories of the Arabic linguistic sciences: *tajwid*, *sarf*, and *nahw*, plus rhetoric (*balagha*), and language (*lugha*, here meaning especially dictionaries). Several works of "history" (*tarikh*) were also included, though some were apparently miscategorized (such as *al-Futuhat al-Makiyya*, a work of philosophy). The occasional flaw aside, this increasing systematization of Islamic knowledge, and its increasing conformity to madrasa curricula elsewhere in the Indian Ocean rim, reflected the cumulative collection efforts of Wang Kuan, Ha Decheng, Da Pusheng, Wang Jingzhai, Ma Songting, and Zhao Zhenwu from the 1900s to the early 1930s (the Shanghai catalog in particular is likely to have reflected works collected by Da and Ha, who resided primarily in Shanghai).[163]

FIGURE 5. "Ramadan sale" catalog of Islamic sciences holdings of Shanghai Chinese Islamic Bookstore, 1930s. Source: Rev. Claude L. Pickens, Jr., Collection on Muslims in China, Harvard-Yenching Library, Box 17.

[162] Francis Robinson, "Education," *New Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 4, pp. 499-500.

[163] See especially Yang Rongbin, *Shanghai Huizu shangren*; Zhao, *Xixing riji*.

The linked preferences for correct belief and Arabic language embodied in the Shanghai catalog did not materialize immediately upon the reception of new texts. With certain texts, even basic comprehension of the contents took time. Simply put, Chinese *ulama* knew that they did not know everything they were looking at or how it all fit together. At this juncture, Chinese Muslim scholars writing in *Yuehua* and elsewhere therefore called repeatedly for the need to undertake "research on doctrine" (*jiaoyi yanjiu*).[164] This new doctrinal research movement further widened the textual differences between coastal versus northwestern Chinese Muslims, and narrowed differences between the coastal Chinese *ulama* and their counterparts around the Indian Ocean. These shifts manifested themselves unevenly but discernably across the various genres of Islamic knowledge.

First and foremost in the hierarchy of the *'ulum naqliyya* comes the Quran itself. The Quran was familiar to Muslims across China before the twentieth century, but this familiarity had limits. At the beginning of the century, most Muslims in China had a sense for its significance and knowledge of some of its verses, but did not necessarily possess a full copy of the Arabic original, and if they did, could not necessarily understand its meanings. Differences in Muslims' relationship to the text had emerged over the generations, furthermore, in the Northwest versus the eastern cities. Northwestern Muslims may have preserved the Quran physically to a greater extent than Muslims in eastern China, and appear to have known it more thoroughly, relied on it more consistently, and reproduced it in greater quantity even before the age of print.[165] Meanwhile, it is not clear exactly how widespread or how emphasized the Quran

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[164] Ma Zicheng, "Jiaoyi yanjiu (yi) [Research on Doctrine (I)]," *Yuehua* 2/20 (1930); Ma Zicheng, "Jiaoyi yanjiu (er) [Research on Doctrine (II)]," *Yuehua* 2/21 (1930); Han Hongkui, "Jiaoyi yanjiu [Research on Doctrine]," *Yuehua* 2/23 (1930).

[165] Many such copies of the Quran, some hand-copied in Sini script, others imported, can be viewed at the Ningxia Provincial Museum in Yinchuan. An extant example of a thirty-volume Qing-era Quran in Sini script is viewable at

was in eastern China before the twentieth century.[166] The Muslims of the Northwest, more densely populated and farther from the capital, also appear to have preserved their ability to comprehend the Arabic original better than Muslims in eastern China. After all, Arabic was traditionally the main written language of literate northwestern Muslims. Again, though they spoke a dialect of Chinese, even the literate did not always know Chinese characters, and instead developed a method known as *xiao'erjing* to transliterate Chinese using Arabic. Accordingly, northwestern Muslims may have adhered to the belief that the Quran can only be properly understood in its original Arabic, for Arabic was not merely a record of God's creation and will, but God's word itself, and was therefore not translatable into other languages.[167] By contrast, Muslims in eastern China had translated aspects of the Quran's meaning into Chinese since the late Ming. Moreover, their relationship to Arabic script in the Qing and early Republican eras was the inverse of the Northwest: fully literate in Chinese for generations, their scholars did not use *xiao'erjing*, but rather used Chinese characters to create phonetic approximations of Arabic.

That being said, Muslims in eastern China did not translate the Quran in its entirety before the twentieth century. Only in the 1920s and 1930s did urban coastal *ulama* begin to argue that it should be translated. Pang Shiqian tells us that the full translation of the Quran was one issue "on which the *ʿulama* of China disagree, because it has been so belated."[168] *Yuehua* in particular became an organ for advocates of translation, for several reasons. One was pressure

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the Islamic Arts Museum of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur; other examples are held at the British Library: http://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2017/08/illumination-and-decoration-in-chinese-qurans.html.

[166] Leslie, Yang, and Youssef, "Arabic Works." Leslie, Yang, and Youssef did not find conclusive evidence that the Quran numbered among the twenty-one Arabic and Persian Islamic works presented to the Qianlong Emperor in 1782 (though this may have reflected a strategic choice rather than an absence of the text).

[167] "Quran," *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2.

[168] Tawadu' (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam,* pp. 82-83.

from China's burgeoning translation and publishing industry, which led to the first two Chinese Quran translations being produced by non-Muslims Tie Zheng and Ji Juemi in 1927 and 1931, respectively.[169] The appearance of non-Muslim translations not only put the Chinese *ulama* in an awkward position by making them seem unwilling or unable to produce their own translation, but also contained, in the words of Pang, a "number of errors" they felt compelled to correct.[170] These errors resulted partly from the fact that the two non-Muslim translations had relied in only small part on the Arabic original. Additional factors prompting the first Muslim Chinese Quran translation are catalogued in *Yuehua*. For example, missionaries had used Arabic to disguise Christian propaganda as Islamic tracts, which they managed to disseminate among Chinese Muslims.[171] Incidents such as these prompted Chinese *ulama* to realize that mere reverence for Arabic as a holy language was not sufficient when their faith was under attack. Chinese Muslims, the argument went, needed to understand the meaning of the Quran in order to relate their faith to "modern trends" and to defend it against the missionary onslaught.[172] On an even more basic level, furthermore, Chinese *ulama* worried about the ability of their students and community at large to grasp the basic content of that faith if it were not taught in Chinese, the only vernacular they could comprehend. Thus, a reliable Quran translation, Muslim-led and based solely on the Arabic original, came to be seen not as blasphemy but as an absolute

[169] Stefan Henning, "God's Translator: Qur'an Translation and the Struggle over a Written National Language in 1930s China," *Modern China* 41/6 (2015): pp. 636-38.

[170] Tawadu' (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, pp. 82-83.

[171] Henning, "God's Translator."

[172] Henning argues that the Chinese political context played a decisive role in determining Muslims' choice to translate the Quran. This agrees with Matsumoto, who has emphasized the importance of "new and accurate Quranic interpretations adapted to the reality of Islam in China" and has shown how Quranic injunctions and hadith were used to justify political initiatives by Chinese Muslim elites, including their integrationist stance as well as their support for the GMD government in the war with Japan. Matsumoto, "Completion of the Idea of Dual Loyalty."

necessity by the *Yuehua*-affiliated *ulama* and other Muslim leaders in eastern China. Writing on this point in *Yuehua*, the future Chinese Azharite and wartime diplomat Wang Shiming spoke of "our weakness in the Arabic language" and the need to "propagate correct and reliable doctrines among our coreligionists" (*xuanchuan zishi jiaoyi de zhengque*).[173] The Chinese *ulama* soon asked Sheikh Ilyas Wang Jingzhai of Tianjin, who had studied for several years in Egypt, to undertake the translation."[174] Wang's finished product, published in 1932 as *Gulanjing yijie*, finally provided Chinese Muslims with a reliable approximation of the Quran's meanings.

Quran translation is one instance where the "Arabization" of Chinese Islam clearly emerges not as the antithesis of "Sinicization," but as a crucial facilitator of it. As the Shanghai catalog shows, Arabic Qurans were being imported from abroad during the Republican era and sold in China. Even though most Chinese Muslims could not read the Arabic, Chinese *ulama* insisted that an authentic Quran translation must be based on an Arabic original. At the same time, as Henning and Matsumoto have also argued, translation would not only make Islam more accessible to Chinese Muslims, but also render it more legible and less threatening to non-Muslim audiences in China, both official and popular, in order to serve the ends of integrationist Chinese Muslim leaders. The normative preference for preserving the original Arabic text lost to the normative preference for accommodating a nationalistic and homogenizing Chinese state and society, while still remaining as "authentically" Islamic as possible.

On the other hand, Chinese Quran translation resulted from a "push" and not only a "pull." Several Azhar sheikhs, including Yusuf al-Dijwi, Mustafa al-Maraghi, and Muhammad al-Khidr Hussein—all of whom knew and taught Chinese Muslims—wrote on the topic of

[173] Henning, "God's Translator," p. 639; Wang Shiming, "Jing [Scripture]," *Yuehua* 3/35 (1931), p.2.

[174] Tawadu' (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, pp. 82-83.

translation of the Quran, with the balance being (qualifiedly) in favor. In addition, the Egyptian '*alim* Muhammad 'Abd al-Latif bin al-Khatib ("Ibn al-Khatib," 1900-81), in his work *al-Furqan*, also advocated translation of the Quran (Ibn Khatib was also known to the Chinese Muslims: his other work, *Awdah al-tafasir*, appeared in the Shanghai catalog).[175] While most of these figures agreed that the Arabic, as the language of God, was ultimately untranslatable, they nevertheless believed that the Quran's meanings could and should be rendered in other languages, and that such a task was worthwhile in pragmatic terms given the need to promote Islam in a world where a majority of Muslims were not native Arabic speakers. The Azhar sheikhs were articulating these positions precisely at the moment when the Chinese Muslim students were arriving there (early 1930s), coinciding with the greater turn toward Arabo-centrism (if not Arabic itself).[176]

The Chinese Muslim translation movement did not stop at the Quran. As is the case elsewhere in the Islamic world, Muslims in twentieth-century China came to rely on *hadith*, the recorded sayings and deeds of the Prophet, as the second most authoritative textual tradition after the Quran. That said, despite its weight in Islam generally, Hadith in China, even more so than the Quran, has a relatively uncertain history. The two Hadith collections now considered most authoritative, *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*, are not attested in the Qianlong list.[177] The main text (*matn*, i.e. excluding footnotes, commentaries, etc.) of both, however, are listed in the Shanghai Chinese Islamic Bookstore's catalog from the Republican era, along with an

[175] Ibn Khatib, *al-Furqan* (Cairo: 1934). *Al-Furqan* is a synonym for "The Quran."

[176] Pang Shiqian, "Gulan yijie [Interpretation of the Quran]," *Yuehua* 13/10-12 (1941).

[177] The *Encyclopaedia of Islam* describes *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim* as being "fairly generally recognized" in the core lands of Islam by the fourth century AH (tenth century AD), even though the compilation of the Prophet's traditions had only begun in earnest by the late second century AH. See "Hadith," *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2.

explanatory commentary (*sharh*) on *Sahih Muslim*. In addition to these, the Shanghai catalog lists only one other *hadith* work, Imam Malik's *al-Muwatta'*.[178]

Chinese *ulama* did study some *hadith* before the 1930s. Da Pusheng, Wang Jingzhai, and Ma Songting studied hadith at Wang Kuan's Niujie school. The text they used was probably the *Arba'un*, work of Persian origin that was long present in China (and that appears on Pang Shiqian's list of the thirteen texts traditionally studied in Chinese madrasas).[179] A related or possibly identical work to the *Arba'un* was the *Khutab* (Ch. *Hu-te-bu*), a Persian collection of sermons and commentaries on hadith, probably translated from the Arabic original *al-Khutab al-arba'in al-wad'aniyya* many centuries earlier by the Mosulite Muhammad bin 'Ali bin 'Abdullah al-Mausili bin Wad'an bin Nasr (d.489/1096).[180] Neither the *Arba'un* nor the *Khutab*, however, appear in the Shanghai bookstore catalog, which lends support to the generalization that Persian works were losing favor to Arabic ones by the 1930s.

As in other genres, the Chinese *ulama*'s shift to a more comprehensive and Arabo-centric engagement with *hadith* began only at the end of the 1920s. At this time, Ma Ruitu, editor of the Hong Kong-based periodical *Tianfang xueli yuekan*, began publishing discussions of *hadith*, or *shengxun*.[181] *Yuehua* picked up on the trend in 1930, with Wang Jingzhai publishing an article on

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[178] Roberto Tottoli argues that the *Muwatta'* was not a clearcut work of *hadith*, but a "legal compendium that is at the same time one of the earliest hadith collections, and [that enjoyed wide] reception in works that formally belong to the genre of *tafsir*. Tottoli notes that the *Muwatta'* has been much more frequently cited as an authority on hadith than on exegesis, which probably explains why the Shanghai catalog would place it in the former category. Roberto Tottoli, "Interrelations and Boundaries between *Tafsīr* and Hadith Literature: The Exegesis of Mālik b. Anas' *Muwatta'* and Classical Qur'anic Commentaries," in Pink and Görke, *Tafsīr*, Ch. 4.

[179] Tawadu' (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, pp. 82-83.

[180] Leslie, Yang, and Youssef, pp. 11-12; Pang 82-83. Pang mentions that Li Yuchen (a.k.a. Tianxiang, d.1936) published a Chinese translation of the *Khutab* in Tianjin in 1923.

[181] Ma's choice of translation is significant; this term in Chinese traditionally could refer to either the "advice of sages" or to imperial edicts.

the problem of false *hadith*. Citing an Arabic essay from an unknown source, he gave fifteen examples of *hadith* that were found to be "baseless" (*wu gen de*, equivalent to Arabic *saqim* or "infirm," the lowest of the four *hadith* classifications). Wang warned that these fifteen, and many more, were "not the actual words of the Prophet."[182]

Nevertheless, reform of *hadith* knowledge progressed slowly. In 1936, the young *'alim* Ma Hongyi of Jincheng, Shanxi, who would later join Pang Shiqian in the sixth delegation of Chinese Azharites, took up Wang Jingzhai's challenge of translating *hadith* and separating the solid from the unreliable. For most of that year, Ma published a series of articles in *Yuehua* titled "Selected Hadith Translations."[183] Finally, in the late 1940s, after returning from Egypt, Ma published another series of articles in *Yuehua* translating the "essence" of the *Sahih al-Bukhari* collection. As already mentioned, Chinese Muslims had possessed this work for several years by this point, for it appears on the Shanghai bookstore list. Ma's translations of 1947, however, appear to be the first time this most authoritative *hadith* collection was discussed in depth in a Chinese Muslim periodical. Ma evidently had maintained his focus on *hadith* while in Cairo, and he notes in *Yuehua* that the Azhar *ulama* had selected some of its most important passages for Ma and the other Chinese Azharites to translate. Ma's rather rudimentary explanation of *hadith* in the introduction to the *Yuehua* series on al-Bukhari hints at Chinese Muslims' general lack of exposure to the genre, as well as the limitations of the Chinese Azharites' capabilities:

> Among the Islamic classic texts, in addition to the Quran, is the *Sahih al-Bukhari* collection. It is something all Muslims scholars across the Islamic world must read. Because they are so numerous, however, and not all relevant to Chinese scholars, the Grand Council of 'Ulama at al-Azhar decided on a set of seven hundred essential passages for our use. Following this decision, Professor 'Abd al-Jalil helped us by adding commentary on these seven hundred passages.[184]

[182] Wang Jingzhai, "Jia de shengyu yishu [A Set of False Hadith]," *Yuehua* 2/5 (1930), pp. 1-2.

[183] Ma Hongyi, "Shengxun xuan yi [Selected hadith translations]," *Yuehua* 8/2, 8/3, 8/4, 8/6 (1936).

In other words, Ma Hongyi's research on *hadith*, greatly facilitated by the opportunity to study at al-Azhar, began to fil an important gap in the Chinese *ulama*'s quest to comprehend and institute "correct belief" in the first half of the twentieth century.

Despite the shift toward *hadith*, the genres of Quranic exegesis (*tafsir*, pl. *tafasir*), foundational catechisms (*'aqida*, pl. *'aqa'id*), and explanatory commentaries (*sharh*, pl. *shuruh*), were much more well-established in China. With regard to *tafsir* literature, its richness in China confirms the recent scholarly assertion that it has been too long seen as "merely an auxiliary science" and "just an extension of the foundational text of Islam."[185] On a basic level, the need for authoritative explanation of the Quran stems from the fact that many of its passages cannot be taken fully literally; therefore, *ulama* over the centuries interpreted scripture according to their understanding of one or more schools of Islam (*madhhab*, pl. *madhahib*) and, in some cases, to their own informed views.[186]

The prominence of *tafsir*, *'aqida*, and *sharh* makes particular sense in China: the isolation of China's Muslims from Muslims elsewhere, as well as the need to defend Islam before a non-Muslim majority, made clear and reliable explications of Muslims' beliefs particularly valuable genres. Perhaps this explains why a number of *tafasir* and *shuruh* appear in both the Qing-era and Republican-era lists. In the Shanghai catalog, such works are listed after the Quran (and before *hadith*), presumably meaning they were considered quite fundamental. They were also more numerous than the Shanghai list's *hadith* works, particularly when we include the works on

[184] Ma Hongyi, "Buhali shengxun shilu jinghua [The Essence of the Bukhari Hadith]," *Yuehua* 1947, no. 6, p. 4.

[185] Pink and Görke, "Introduction," in Pink and Görke, *Tafsir*, pp. 1-2.

[186] Ibid., pp. 4-5. Orientalists such as Ignáz Goldziher claimed that *tafsir* was fundamentally repetitive and imitative, hence scholars' relative neglect of it. By contrast, Pink and Görke opt for a moderate but more open-minded definition of *tafsir* as a "literary genre with fixed characteristics" (i.e. not simply any text seeming or claiming to be Quranic interpretation). To this they add Walid Saleh's definition that *tafsir* is a "genealogical tradition."

tawhid, totaling eleven as opposed to the four works of *hadith*. More significantly, *tafsir* and other doctrinal works embody a more revealing combination of long-held and newly-acquired texts. As a whole, these works reinforce our impression of eastern Chinese *ulama*'s gradual movement from a relatively eclectic and fragmentary engagement with classic texts to a more orthodox and comprehensive one in the early twentieth century—and as such, their divergence from textual trends on the frontiers and greater conformity with those found outside China.

The *tafsir* works in the Shanghai catalog do not represent a total rupture from the Qing-era curricula. The oldest exegetical text that appears on both Pang Shiqian's list of works used in Qing times and in the Shanghai catalog is the *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* ("*Tafsir* of the Two Jalals"), initiated by the Mamluk-era Egyptian scholar Jalal al-Din al-Mahalli (790-864AH/1389-1459AD) and completed by his pupil Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (859-911AH/1445-1505AD). The work employs a word-by-word approach, with marginal commentary (*hashiya*) arranged on facing pages surrounding the core text (*matn*) of the Quran, as was the common practice. Importantly, the *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* became popular for being one of the most accessible Quranic exegeses, due to its plain style and relatively short length (only a single volume).[187] Brevity and accessibility no doubt explain the text's popularity among Chinese Muslims who, as Pang noted, often struggled with the grammatical intricacies and unfamiliar sounds of the Arabic language. The *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* was reproduced multiple times before the nineteenth century, and reprinted at least fourteen times in the nineteenth century and again in 1934, so it is entirely possible that it arrived in China on multiple occasions and by multiple routes.[188] In sum, the

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[187] Feras Hamza, trans., Introduction to *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* by al-Mahalli and al-Suyuti (Louisiana: Fons Vitae, 2008), p. 1; Walid A. Saleh, "Preliminary Remarks on the Historiography of *tafsir* in Arabic: A History of the Book Approach," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 12 (2010): p. 21.

[188] Provocatively, it may have done so quite early, and perhaps by the sea route, given the wide familiarity with al-Suyuti throughout the Indian Ocean. It has been found that even during al-Suyuti's lifetime, his works were already

presence of the *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* on the Shanghai list—and by extension, in the growing collections of the Chinese *ulama* of the eastern cities—demonstrates some continuity in the genre of exegesis in China from the Qing to Republican eras.

Provocatively, the Shanghai catalog's *tafsirs* sometimes overlapped with texts held by the Northwest Sufi brotherhoods. Another major *tafsir* on the Shanghai list is the abovementioned *Ruh al-bayan* ("Essence of Elucidation," or the "Soul of the Quran"). The provenance of this work differs completely from the *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*: as indicated above, it was produced by Ismail Haqqi al-Bursawi (1063-1137AH/1652-1725AD), a Mujaddidi ("reformer" or "revivalist") of the Khalidi branch of the Naqshbandi Sufi order. While Ismail Haqqi was an Ottoman from Bursa, the *Ruh al-bayan* became popular particularly in South Asia, and was eventually translated into Urdu. The presence of this Sufi revivalist *tafsir* in the otherwise modernist Shanghai catalog is surprising due to the overlap with the holdings of the Naqshbandi Huasi (see above). It is also surprising for its sheer length—ten volumes of five to six hundred pages each—which might have felt prohibitive for Chinese Muslims who, as Pang tells us, struggled with the Arabic language. The easy conclusion is that the coastal Muslims did not use it extensively.[189]

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in circulation throughout the Middle East, India, and East Africa, "where he, from Cairo, played the role of counselor in matters of Islamisation." Further east on the oceanic route, one scholar has argued that the *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* provided the uncredited basis for the *Tarjuman al-Mustafid* ("The Useful Translation") the first known complete Quran commentary in Malay, produced by 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Singkili (c.1615-93) in the Sultanate of Aceh. In other words, while the *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* had definitely reached China by the mid-Qing (i.e. eighteenth century AD), it may have arrived as much as a century earlier. E. Geoffrey, "al-Suyuti," *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2; Peter Riddell, "The Sources of 'Abd al-Ra'uf's *Tarjuman al-Mustafid*," *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 57/2 (247) (1984): 113-18.

[189] I have not found any mention of the *Ruh al-Bayan* in Chinese Muslim periodicals indicating how eastern Chinese *ulama* viewed it in relation to the other major exegeses they were using. The absence of the *Ruh al-bayan* from the Qing lists of Pang or Liu Zhi (or Leslie, Yang, and Youssef), suggests that this *tafsir* did not enter eastern China during the early modern period when Sufism was in the ascendant, but perhaps instead as a result of the peripatetic collection efforts of leading Chinese imams in the early twentieth century.

We should not assume, of course, that the presence or absence of a particular text suffices to prove a particular ideological orientation. After all, madrasas around the Indian Ocean more often than not held texts from

The Shanghai catalog's *tafsirs* exhibit considerable temporal and geographical diversity. A newer *tafsir* on the Shanghai list, and one whose presence is more readily understandable, is the *Awdah al-tafasir* ("Clearest of Tafsirs"). Produced by the abovementioned Egyptian scholar Muhammad 'Abd al-Latif bin al-Khatib when he was only in his thirties, this one-volume *tafsir* was well-received in Egypt and received the endorsement of several Azhar sheikhs including Yusuf al-Dijwi.[190] Meanwhile, the *Fath al-qadir*, authored by the Yemeni scholar Muhammad al-Shawkani (1173-1255AH/1759-1839AD) and considered a foundational *tafsir*, also appeared in the Shanghai catalog. While miscategorized the work as *fiqh*, the significance is that Chinese Muslims were importing a wide array of texts from multiple Indian Ocean locales.

Perhaps the most interesting work in the Shanghai catalog was the *'aqa'id* (creed) of Abu Hafs 'Umar Najm al-Din al-Maturidi al-Nasafi (d. 537AH/1142AD), and the accompanying commentary (*sharh*) by Sa'd al-Din Mas'ud bin 'Umar bin 'Abdullah al-Taftazani (722-93AH/1322-90AD). Both al-Nasafi and al-Taftazani lived and worked in the environs of Samarqand. Al-Nasafi's work was the "first abridged form of the creed according to the scholastic method of the new orthodoxy."[191] We do not know when their texts first became available in China, but it is reasonable to expect that it could have done so quite early given the huge influx of Muslim officials, scholars, soldiers, scientists, and texts into China from Central

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all four *madhhabs* and from multiple interpretive perspectives. Their libraries were fluid and diverse (see, for example, the holdings of the Indian madrasa special collection at Butler Library, Columbia University). The notion that a given madrasa would hold only the texts representing the viewpoint predominant among its own *ulama* is erroneous. The point is not so much that particular individual texts were common between Chinese Muslim holdings and those of madrasas elsewhere, but that catalogs such as the Shanghai one *as a whole*, as well as their manner of *structuring* Islamic knowledge, resemble the holdings of Indian Ocean madrasas more closely than they resembles either the Qing-era Chinese Muslim lists or the known holdings of frontier Sufi institutions. I am grateful to Muzaffar Alam for providing this and other perspectives on the Shanghai catalog.

[190] Mahir Hassan, "Rahil Ibn al-Khatib," *al-Masry al-Yawm*, 24 September 2008; Yusuf al-Dijwi, [Statement of Endorsement], in Ibn al-Khatib, *Awdah al-tafasir* (Cairo: 1934), p. *hah*.

[191] "Al-Nasafi," *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2.

Asia and the former ‘Abbasid lands during the Mongol Yuan (1272-1368). Pang Shiqian includes Taftazani’s *sharh* on his list of works commonly used in old-style Chinese madrasas. Furthermore, Pang states in *China and Islam* that the Yang Zhongming, a prominent member of the Chinese *ulama*, had translated the *Nasafiyya* into Chinese.[192] In other words, despite the fact that the *Nasafiyya* and Taftazani’s *sharh* had long been present in China, Chinese *ulama* in the Republican era did not cast it aside (in contrast to other classic texts of Persian or Central Asian provenance), but rather further disseminated it as a valuable guide to correct belief.[193]

Why were al-Nasafi and al-Taftazani so highly regarded among modernist Chinese Muslims? Simply pointing to a blanket preference for Arabic and Arab authorities does not suffice here: although al-Nasafi and al-Taftazani wrote in Arabic, they were not themselves Arab and did not live in the Arab lands. Adherence to the Hanafi *madhhab*, which became important to Chinese Muslims in certain other contexts, is also probably not the primary reason here either, for although al-Taftazani is usually categorized as Hanafi, he was also versed in the Shafii tradition and is sometimes identified as Shafii.[194] It appears the answer had more to do, rather, with the more subjective perception of al-Nasafi and al-Taftazani’s works as “reliable and correct.” Despite their medieval and Central Asian provenance, al-Nasafi’s *‘aqa’id* and al-Taftazani’s *sharh* are listed in the Shanghai catalog in the section on *tawhid*, alongside Muhammad ‘Abduh’s *Risalat al-tawhid*, one of the most important works of Islamic modernism.

[192] Pang, *China and Islam*, pp. 69, 82.

[193] Sobieroj adds that both al-Nasafi and al-Taftazani are “still studied [in China] to this day.” Sobieroj, “Arabic Manuscripts on the Periphery, p. 18. See also Brockelmann 1,548-550, and Ma Tong, *Zhongguo yisilan jiaopai menhuan suyuan shilue* [A Brief Historical Investigation of Chinese Muslim Sects] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1985).

[194] “al-Taftazani,” *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2.

A colorful episode from the early years of the Chinese Azharites sheds light on why this may have been the case. In the abovementioned July 1934 lecture on Islam in China organized in Cairo by Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib and attended by ‘Abduh’s primary disciple, Rashid Rida, Ma Jian noted that the “Muslims of China hold the *Sharh al-‘aqa’id al-nasafiyya* in high esteem, though there are some who reject it or at least view it with skepticism.”[195] Ma’s otherwise brief comment came in the context of a discussion of doctrinal differences between the Chinese *qudama’* (i.e. *gedimu* or *laojiao*) and the Sufi orders of the Northwest: the former, Ma implied, had retained their sense of correct belief, whereas he derided the latter for their “ignorance” (*jahl*) and “superstition” (*khurafat*)—in the presence of Rida, whose *al-Manar* was one of the main Islamic modernist organs expressing the very same polemics in Arabic. Ma may or may not have known that al-Taftazani did indeed have anti-Sufi credentials, being generally regarded as anti-Mu’tazilite and having authored a polemic tract against the Sufi master Ibn al-‘Arabi and his doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* (“the unity of being”).[196] What Ma unquestionably did know was that his audience included some of the foremost proponents of Islamic modernism, including of its anti-Sufi positions. When Ma’s lecture was finished, Rashid Rida praised it as “one of the most useful he had heard in years.” Nasafi’s *‘aqa’id* was of the oldest classic Islamic works known to Chinese Muslims, but the Shanghai catalog now categorized it as a work of “*tawhid*” (the doctrine of the oneness of God, though in this context also meaning “doctrine” more generally), placing it alongside Islamic modernist works such as ‘Abduh’s *Risalat al-tawhid*. To be able to claim that one of the oldest Arabic Islamic works used by Chinese Muslims was also

[195] Muhammad Makin al-Sini, *Nazrah jami‘a*, p. 28.

[196] “al-Taftazani,” *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2.

the most in keeping with modernist priorities lent tremendous legitimacy to modernist Chinese Muslims in their search for an authentic, authoritative Islam that could push back against Sufi influence in the Northwest.

Conceptual Convergences: "Islamic Civilization" and its "Arab Essence"

The processes of textual transnationalism detailed above did not occur in a hermetically sealed space linking modernist Chinese Muslims only to Islamic modernists elsewhere. Both groups, rather, were conditioned by their (often fraught) dialogue with missionaries and Orientalists in Europe and North America. The academic and popular histories of such figures—Lothrop Stoddard, H.G. Wells, Samuel Zwemer, and others—were disseminated across the Middle East and Asia and translated into Arabic and Chinese. Generally speaking, as this process unfolded, Muslims and non-Muslims alike often corrected the details and challenged the conclusions of missionary and Orientalist studies, but less frequently contested their underlying assumptions. As is well known, one of the most important of these assumptions was that human societies are divided into discrete and hierarchized units based largely on factors such as religion and race. Very broadly speaking, with the First World War, a norm of "Civilization" held to be universal and rooted in the European Enlightenment gave way, especially in the eyes of "non-Western" political and intellectual leaders, to a more plural notion of "civilizations" rooted in the authority of older cultural and religious "traditions." This transition was reflected linguistically in the Arabic distinction between the earlier term *tamaddun* (a general quality of urbanity) versus the later term *hadara* (a more particular sedentary developedness), and in Chinese between the term *wenming* (more general literary achievement) versus *wenhua* (more particular literary or cultural change). Muslims and Chinese had naturalized such categories, ever since moments such as the famous Renan-Afghani debate of the 1880s (in which the French Orientalist and the pan-Islamic

activist debated whether or when Islam had lost the "scientific spirit"). The specific result of civilizational discourse for Chinese Muslims was that Arabic and Arabness were increasingly defined, yet accepted a priori, as the essence of "Islamic civilization." In other words, just as Chinese Muslims were starting to rediscover the Islamic world outside China, the center of that world was growing more distant. In earlier centuries, contact with Samarqand or Singapore more than sufficed as contact with Islam; now, even many Muslims in those places had come to agree that accessing the true Islam meant traveling all the way to Mecca or Cairo.

Orientalist and missionary ideas often lived colorful careers within the dynamic of Sino-Middle Eastern textual transnationalism—and often with surprisingly little resistance. While we have noted above Chinese Muslims' opposition non-Muslims' translating the Quran, they and Muslims elsewhere often saw foreign-produced histories of Islam, curiously, as relatively unproblematic. Take for example Lothrop Stoddard (1883-1950), the Harvard historian and open white supremacist whose best-known work was *The Rising Tide of Color against White World-Supremacy* (1920). Another of Stoddard's works from the time was titled *The New World of Islam* (1921), which began with an introduction on the "decline and fall of the old Islamic world" followed by a discussion of the new "Mohammedan revival." Such works clearly introduced a temporality of "florescence and decline" applicable to all civilizations. They also placed greatest emphasis on the role of the Arabs in Islamic history: Stoddard attributed Islam's decline to the transition from the rule of "pure-blooded Arabs" to "mixed-bloods" and corrupting "Turks." The twentieth century revival of Islam, by a similar logic, was being propelled by a "Neo-Arab" revival. Stoddard's implication that Islam was currently undergoing a revival appealed to many Muslim readers, despite the author's broad racism and assertions that this renaissance was following a particularly long decline. Stoddard's *New World of Islam* was translated between

1924 and 1933 by the pan-Islamic activist Shakib Arslan, the same period in which he produced his better-known *Why Did the Muslims Fall Behind?* (*Limadha ta'akhkhara al-muslimun?*).[197] Even though Arslan tended to emphasize Islamic unity across racial differences, the notion of a second rise after the decline resonated nevertheless.

In July 1933, Hai Weiliang—then at the Nadwat al-Ulama in Lucknow—referenced Stoddard in a Chinese article in *Yuehua* on British policies toward Arabia and India, in an attempt to understand Europeans' views (he knew that Stoddard was American) toward the "Islamic world" and the institution of the "Caliphate." Hai, while absorbing Stoddard's arguments about the Arabs and approving of his notion of Islmamic "revival," nevertheless extracted several quotations from Arslan's translation that emphasized the Hajj and the institution of the Caliphate, rather than Arabness, as the unifying core of Islam.[198] In other words, some Chinese Muslims pushed back in certain ways against a growing consensus that the Arabs were the best Muslims. At the same time, however, Hai was writing this article while studying at the Nadwa, an institution known for its heavy emphasis on the Arabic language as the most authentic means of accessing Islamic knowledge. He was also reading Arslan's writings in Arabic, and within two years, he would move to Cairo to continue his studies at al-Azhar, the epicenter of the supposedly Arab Islamic revival. There, Hai would compose his Arabic-language magnum opus *al-'Alaqat bayn al-'Arab wa-l-Sin* [*Relations between the Arabs and China*], a history modeled on the work *Relations between the Arabs and India* of the Nadwa scholar Sulayman al-Nadwi. This history indeed privileged the place of the Arabs in the history

[197] Lothrop Stoddard, *Hadir al-'alam al-islami* [*The Islamic World at Present*], 4 vols., translated by Shakib Arslan (Cairo: Dar al-Babi al-Halabi, 1924-33); Shakib Arslan, *Limadha ta'akhkhara al-muslimun wa limadha taqaddama ghayruhum* [*Why Did the Muslims Fall Behind, and Why Did Others Progress?*] (Cairo: 1930).

[198] Hai Weiliang, "Hanzhi wenti yu ying-yin zhengzhi [The Hijaz Problem and Anglo-Indian Politics]," *Yuehua* 5.19 (July 1933), pp. 9-13.

of Sino-Islamic relations, and would in turn be cited in his fellow Chinese Azharite Pang Shiqian's work *China and Islam*—also composed in Arabic.

Stoddard and Arslan were not the first time Chinese Muslims encountered the question of Arabs, Arabic, and Arabness through a foreign interlocutor. In the 1920s and 1930s, Chinese Muslims also payed close attention to the writings of Christian missionaries on Islam generally and Islam in China specifically.[199] For example, in 1937 the Chinese Muslim Wang Weiling published in *Yuehua* a list of essays on Chinese Islam that had appeared in the Orientalist journal *Moslem World*. Most of these essays had been authored by members of the China Inland Mission, known for its extensive studies of and concern with Islam in China. One missionary work cited on the list was Marshall Broomhall's *Islam in China: A Neglected Problem* (1910).[200] Although Broomhall had spent considerable time in China and with Chinese Muslims and knew of the many Persian and Central Asian influences in Chinese Islam, his book began with a discussion of "China and the Arabs" during the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates. Moreover, its ethnographic sections also focused on features such as Arabic mosque inscriptions. In the case of the missionaries, perhaps this tendency to focus on Arabic and Arabness can be explained by their education: most members of the China Inland Mission had been sent to Cairo for Arabic training (but not Persian training) before proceeding to their assignments in China. In other words, they arrived in China already seeing Islam, on a fundamental level, as primarily associated with and expressing Arabness. Indeed, they tended to assume that Chinese Muslims

[199] See for example Wang Weiling, "'Musilin shijie' zhong guanyu zhongguo huijiao lunwen yimu [A Translated list of essays regarding Chinese Islam that have appeared in the journal *Moslem World*]," *Yuehua* 9.11 (1937), pp. 10-12.

[200] Marshall Broomhall, *Islam in China: A Neglected Problem* (London: Morgan & Scott, Ltd., for the China Inland Mission, 1910).

"cannot be effectively reached…without an Arabic-speaking missionary."[201] Like Stoddard after him, Broomhall spoke of Chinese and Arabs in civilizational terms (though in this case, he rarely used the term "civilization" itself). He also, like Stoddard, spoke of the "present Mohammedan revival" and its possible implications for China.

In short, urban coastal Chinese Muslims were beginning to absorb many of these assumptions and vocabularies by the early 1930s. One early example is Li Tingbi's two 1930 essay series in *Yuehua* on the history of Islam (presented, indeed, as *the* history of Islam). Titled "Islamic Civilization" (*Yisilan zhi wenhua*) and "The Arabs' Contributions to Civilization" (*Alaboren duiyu wenhua shang zhi gongxian*), these essays focused entirely on the early history of Islam and therefore on Arab achievements.[202] The increase in terminological commonalities is obvious. Li's essays were based largely on the works of Toynbee, and mentioned features of Islamic history such as Galen, Ibn Sina, algorithms, Harun al-Rashid, Cordoba, the Seville Alcazar, and the Alhambra (all provided in Roman letters in the midst of the Chinese text). Notably, they also mentioned the "Semitic, Hamitic, and Aryan races." Of course, the routes by which such content entered Chinese Muslim circles were often extremely circuitous: another *Yuehua* article from 1929, this time by Zhao Zhenwu, translated an article by Abdürrešid Ibrahim, the ex-Ottoman intermediary and founder of the Tokyo Mosque, who instead cited John William Draper as his source for an Arabo-centric history of Islam.[203] In short, the overall effect

[201] Broomhall, *Islam in China*, p. xiv.

[202] Li Tingbi, "Yisilan zhi wenhua [Islamic Civilization]," *Yuehua* 2 (1930); "Alaboren duiyu wenhua shang zhi gongxian [The Arabs' Contributions to Civilization]," *Yuehua* 2 (1930).

[203] Abdurresid Ibrahim, "Yisilan gudai wenhua [Ancient Islamic Civilization]," trans. Zhao Zhenwu, *Yuehua* 1.4 (1929). Draper was the author of the famous *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science* (New York: D. Appleton, 1874).

was that Chinese Muslims were receiving an Arabized and essentialized image of the Islamic world and Islamic history from multiple directions.

This trend of Arabizing Islamic history reached its apogee in the work of the brilliant Chinese Muslim scholar Bai Shouyi—who later became a leading "Marxist" historian during the PRC. As we will see in detail in Chapter Three, Bai's scholarship on Islamic history, despite recovering rich evidence of Islam's complexity and multiregionalism, nevertheless insisted on arguing for a smooth trajectory from "Arab origins" to subsequent "Sinicization." Without giving too much away, the reason for adopting this temporal logic had very much to do with the integrationist politics of Chinese Muslim elites in the 1930s.

In sum, leading Chinese Muslims' ways of speaking about the "Islamic world," the "Arabs," and "civilization" were increasingly coming to resemble those of Orientalists and missionaries by the early 1930s. In addition to the course of textual transnationalism and curricular reform itself, this conceptual convergence must be seen as an additional, crucial factor in the coalescence of Chinese Muslims' normative preference, emerging precisely at this time, for the Arabic language and for the authority of Arab voices on Islamic modernism.

Conclusion: The Contingency of "Arabization"

Texts, by their nature, simultaneously embody both imagination and authority. In the first four decades of the twentieth century, urban coastal Chinese Muslims' contact with the Islamic world outside China began as an exploratory and extremely heterogeneous process of "textual transnationalism" that accompanied the expansion of modernist institutions and publications in China itself. To an extent, developments in both print media and the madrasa curriculum remained exploratory and heterogeneous. Nevertheless, the process of exploration led, circuitously and contingently, to a more prescriptive and aspiringly authoritative consensus that

Islam in China should be reformed along Arabo-centric and Islamic modernist lines. The following chapter will explore with greater specificity how urban coastal Chinese Muslims' Arabo-centrism and Islamic modernism shaped new assertions and exertions of authority—both doctrinal and political—as the GMD state and its Muslim allies sought to consolidate the governance of China's Northwest frontiers and their predominantly Sufi populations.

CHAPTER TWO: MAKING ISLAM CHINESE

> The large number of Muslims scattered across the Northwest are simple-minded and honest in character. In light of the need to consolidate the development and defense of the Northwest frontier, there is no way forward but for the central government to smelt and cast the Muslims of the Northwest in the image of the Three Principles of the People.
> –Chinese Muslim Youth Society petition to central government, 1932[204]

> Among the essential points of Islamic education, first and foremost is the study and affirmation of God's unicity (*'ilm al-tawhid*)…If people do not know that there is one true God…chaos and confusion (*daluan*) will return ceaselessly to the lands under heaven (*tianxia*)!
> –Da Pusheng, circa 1939[205]

Introduction: Chinese Muslim Support for Guomindang Nation-Building

As occupied as Chinese Muslims were with refining their understandings of Islamic modernism and building connections to the Islamic world outside China, that history cannot be fully understood without reference to the also highly fluid mainstream of Chinese state and society. Throughout the Republican era, the fate of China's Muslims was never far removed from the overall course of the country's politics and the policies of the Guomindang (GMD). As at certain earlier points in Islam's history in China, elite Chinese Muslims—in many cases the same figures, or associates of the figures, introduced in Chapter One—attempted to protect their community as well as their own status by positioning themselves favorably toward the dominant groups politically (the GMD) and socio-culturally (the Han).

One need not look far for evidence of Muslim elites' contingent yet deliberate entanglement with the GMD. The GMD owed its very consolidation of power in no small part to

[204] Parliamentary Minutes Collection, KMT Archives (Taipei), *hui* 4.2/16.12.36.

[205] Da Pusheng, *Yisilan liushu* (*Six Treatises on Islam*), p. 14.

the actions of a Chinese Muslim. Chiang Kai-shek's purge of the Communists in the Shanghai massacre of 12 April 1927, a foundational event of the Nanjing Decade (1927-37) and the Chinese Civil War (1927-49), was carried out by Bai Chongxi, the highest-ranking Muslim in the GMD.[206] This controversial action, in which several thousand CCP members and pro-Communist laborers were tortured or killed, held great strategic significance in Chiang Kai-shek's struggle against the CCP, as well as in his positioning vis-à-vis Wang Jingwei's rival left-leaning GMD faction. It also, however, held symbolic significance in the evolution of Muslim-GMD relations. This was a dramatic and violent, but by no means unique, instance in which a leading Muslim was left with little choice but to perform loyalty to the nationalist cause, and made the most of it. Of course, Bai was first and foremost a Chinese general following orders, and the extent to which Islam played an active role in his life and career is an open question, and not the most fruitful one (at the very least, a calligraphic *bismillah* and the name of the Prophet adorn his grave in Taipei's Chongde Muslim cemetery, alongside Chinese inscriptions and the coat of arms of the Republic). On the other hand, Bai's status as both a staunch anti-communist and a figurehead of China's Muslims, regardless of personal piety, is beyond doubt. After the Shanghai massacre, Bai cemented his position close to Chiang Kai-shek. While differences emerged between the two in the early 1930s, Bai again rose in favor and prominence during the war with Japan in his capacity as one of China's most effective military leaders, and as the titular head of China's Muslims overseeing several joint Muslim-GMD wartime initiatives. By the early 1940s, Bai stood atop a pyramid of "patriotic and progressive" Muslims formally incorporated

[206] See for example Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-shek and the Struggle for Modern China* (Cambridge: Belknap, 2009). Taylor mentions Bai's role in the purge, but not his Muslimness.

into the structure of government. His role in the Shanghai massacre was but one of these Muslims' many gestures of support for the political victory and ideological vision of the GMD.

Chinese Muslims' proactively compliant approach to the GMD had its roots in China's fraught empire-to-nation transition, particularly in questions regarding frontier territory. During the Nanjing Decade (1927-37) and Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45), Chinese Muslim ("Hui") elites participated actively in Guomindang (GMD, i.e. "Nationalist Party") government efforts to control China's vast, largely Muslim northwestern frontiers (today's Ningxia, Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai, and Xinjiang). At a time of acute political and territorial crisis, Chinese frontier nation-building involved multiple forms of infrastructural expansion. This chapter introduces these projects and details several interrelated ways in which Chinese Muslim elites participated in GMD state- and nation-building across the northwestern frontiers.

In a sense, the status of China's frontiers was a very old question. The varied relations between China's low-lying agricultural regions and urban centers (roughly the eastern third of the country today, where 80 percent of the population lives; often called "China proper") and the steppes, deserts, mountains, and plateaux that make up its frontiers challenge the definition of Chinese history itself. On the one hand, Chinese history cannot be understood by examining the politics, society, and culture of "China proper" alone. On the other, the notion that "China" was always coterminous with the present-day borders of the Chinese nation-state is even more problematic. Xinjiang and Tibet were not incorporated into a "Chinese" system until the Qing conquests of the mid-eighteenth century, and the status of these regions remained largely ambiguous until they were re-conquered in the early PRC era. The frontiers were always relevant to Chinese history, but their destiny was never inevitable.

The frontier question took on new political, geopolitical, and ethnic dimensions in the context of the twentieth-century empire-to-nation transition. The predominantly Han revolutionaries who had overthrown the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912) to form China's first Republic (1911-49) blamed the Qing's failures on the decadence of its Manchu rulers, who were increasingly imagined as "foreigners" (an argument Chinese Muslims would occasionally reproduce).[207] China's new Han leaders not only viewed themselves as the foremost constituency in Chinese society and the most deserving candidates to steer the new nation, but also were determined to retain control of the vast, largely non-Han frontier regions the Qing had ruled before them. It is an irony of history that as China emerged from years of weakening and warlordism, its new unified nationalist government came to define success in no small part in terms of inheriting the territorial mantle of its otherwise despised and derided Qing predecessors. Effective frontier governance became a major question for any new Chinese government's viability and legitimacy.

After Chiang Kai-shek's Northern Expedition (1926-28) reunified China's north(east) and south(east), the Nanjing government, though still beset by difficulties, could for the first time devote serious attention to the frontiers. As if confirming the government's worst fears, however, several frontier regions gained independence (Outer Mongolia and part of Xinjiang), maintained de facto independence (Tibet), or remained under warlord rule (Inner Mongolia, Yunnan, and much of Xinjiang) during the Republican era. On top of this, Japan's conquest of Manchuria in the Mukden Incident of 18 September 1931 was an especially harsh blow that prompted the GMD to look for new opportunities in the regions remaining more or less under its control. By

[207] Edward J.M. Rhoads, *Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000).

this point, of all the frontier territories, only the Muslim-dominated Northwest remained reliably, if still loosely, tied to the center.[208] The GMD feared that this region too would break away from China or be carved up by imperialist powers such as Britain, Russia, or Japan, unless something was done to tie the territory and its peoples more firmly to Nanjing.

Beginning in the early 1930s, the GMD government built or tried to build railroads, highways, dams, farms, factories, and trading centers across the northwestern frontiers as a means of binding those territories and their populations to the center. Muslims were involved in these processes on multiple levels. The powerful Chinese Muslim militarists de facto military and political control of the Northwest, and their increasing participation in frontier governance institutions, helped set the conditions under which the GMD could even contemplate developing the region. Virtually unconquerable in their own territories, yet incapable or undesiring of full independence, these Chinese Muslim "warlords" now took it upon themselves to help Nanjing integrate Muslims into the new nation-state. In addition, Northwest development by definition targeted the ordinary Muslims living there, though rarely identified them as such or sought their input; Chinese-speaking Muslims of the Northwest in fact tended to belong to a number of Sufi groups centered in or near major towns or around mosque-tomb complexes (*gongbei*). Finally, while most of the GMD's Northwest development projects did not reach fruition, they nevertheless helped set the parameters and the tone of relations between elite coastal Chinese Muslims (*ulama*, officials, intellectuals, and communal leaders) and the GMD government.

In keeping with the pro-state stance of the Ma warlords, who were their main financial and sociopolitical supporters, the tight-knit network of Chinese Muslim *'ulama* and intellectual

[208] Jonathan N. Lipman, "Ethnicity and Politics in Republican China: The Ma Family Warlords of Gansu," *Modern China* 10/3 (July 1984): 288; see also Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, Ch. 5.

and communal elites in Beijing, Shanghai, and Nanjing strove to show that their community, unlike the Mongols, Manchus, Uyghurs, or Tibetans, was unwavering in its loyalty to the Han revolution and the Chinese nation. In particular, Chinese Muslims of the eastern urban centers wanted to set themselves apart from the separatist and culturally dissimilar Uyghurs, and correct the lack of distinction in the state's categorization of all China's Muslims ("Turkic" Uyghurs, "Chinese" Sino-Muslims, and others) as "Hui."[209] They also wanted to show that they were unlike the Chinese Muslims in Manchuria, some of whom either willingly or for lack of alternative did not oppose the Japanese occupation—which even included plans for the formation of a separate Muslim puppet state—lending credence to the Japanese Empire's argument that "China" was not a nation but merely an accidental and artificial amalgamation of distinct communities.[210] Finally, with the nineteenth-century Muslim uprisings still in living memory, they wanted to show that they would reject the path of those Muslims who had rebelled across the Northwest and even established independent Muslim states in Yunnan and East Turkistan.[211] To the contrary, they presented themselves as the intermediaries through whom the state could integrate the poorer, less literate, and allegedly more superstitious and less patriotic northwestern Muslims into the nation-state via development, education, and cultural Sinicization.

In other words, infrastructural expansion in China's Northwest was not only physical, but also organizational, discursive, and pedagogical. Throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, Chinese Muslim elites formed associations that supported the GMD's frontier policies—and that re-articulated Chinese Muslim identity in terms consistent with those policies. These same Chinese

[209] This formulation had appeared, most prominently, in Sun Yat-sen's characterizations of China's "five races" (*wu zu*), the Han, Manchus, Mongolians, Muslims, and Tibetans (*Han Man Meng Hui Zang*).

[210] Again, on the Japanese empire and Chinese Muslims, see Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim," and Hammond, "Conundrum of Collaboration."

[211] Atwill, *Chinese Sultanate*; Kim, *Holy War in China*; Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, Ch. 5.

Muslim leaders worked to train a new generation of young Chinese Muslim schoolteachers who could institute pedagogical reforms in schools across the northwestern frontiers, teaching local Muslims to be both good modern Muslims and patriotic citizens of the new China.

Frontier educational reform represented one of the most important ways in which Chinese Muslims' fluid and borderless engagement with Islamic modernist thought from outside China came to support the bordered hegemonic project of making Islam Chinese. According to the Chinese Muslim elites, Islamic modernism's emphasis on reason and orthodoxy was entirely consonant with the ideological imperatives of Chinese nationalism under the GMD. In particular, the two worldviews drew an effectively identical distinction between "rational religion" and "irrational superstition," a distinction that informed Chinese Muslim elites' attempts to remake frontier Sufi Muslims in a new image, simultaneously Islamic modernist and Chinese nationalist. Simply put, Chinese Muslim elites lent an indispensable type of cultural legitimacy and specificity to Chinese nation-building that the GMD state could not generate on its own.

From the late 1920s to the mid-1940s, Islamic modernism and its proponents became an infrastructure of Chinese nation-building. As Susan Leigh Star states, infrastructures are "both transparent and opaque": they are easy to take for granted, but they also create and conceal new relations and discrepancies of power.[212] They facilitate both circulation and control. Furthermore, as AbdouMaliq Simone has argued, people themselves can become a form of infrastructure, especially in instances where the power of the central state is limited: this was absolutely the case with Chinese Muslim elites' support for GMD frontier nation-building.[213] In sum, Chinese

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[212] Susan Leigh Star, "The Ethnography of Infrastructure." *American Behavioral Scientist* 43/3 (1999): pp. 377–391.

[213] AbdouMaliq Simone, *City Life from Jakarta to Dakar: Movements at the Crossroads (*New York: Routledge, 2009).

Muslim elites facilitated, legitimized, and implemented GMD state- and nation-building across the Northwest frontiers in a period of territorial crisis and war, often to greater effect than the state could achieve on its own. Islam and Muslims became integral to Chinese nation-making and GMD policy, and in the process, the integrationist Chinese Muslim elites' version of Chinese Muslim history and identity attained hegemony both descriptively and prescriptively.

Northwest Frontier Development and China's Manifest Destiny Crisis

In mid-1932, He Yingqin (1890-1987), a top general and friend of Chiang Kai-shek from their military academy days in Japan, addressed the GMD's Central Party Bureau enthusiastically supporting the new "Northwest Development Plan" (*Kaifa Xibei jihua*). Perhaps this was an attempt to salvage his own career. While He had secured multiple southeastern provinces during the Northern Expedition, and backed the Shanghai massacre, his record had been tarnished more recently when his forces failed in the Second Encirclement Campaign against the CCP's Jiangxi Soviet (April-May 1931), suffering major losses.[214] He may have hoped that joining the bandwagon of frontier development would offer an opportunity to distinguish himself and to return to Chiang's good graces. Whatever the reason, He's speech articulated an emerging confluence of interests in the early 1930s that was much larger than himself, involving officials, domestic and foreign financiers, warlords, foreign-educated Chinese engineers and geologists, Han migrants, and Chinese Muslims.

He's speech opened with a politically loaded description of a journey to the Huashan, located east of Xi'an in Shaanxi Province. He invited his listeners to imagine this peak as the spiritual center of the country, situated on an imaginary line separating the flat fertile east from

[214] See for example Peter Worthing, *General He Yingqing: The Rise and Fall of Nationalist China* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2016).

the rugged wild west. For support, he quoted the Western Han aphorism saying, "Lands east of the Mountain produce officials, whereas lands west produce generals," claiming that the Huashan's epicentric status dated back to the "ancient civilization of the Yellow River."[215] In this era of important and easily politicized archaeological discoveries,[216] the presence of historical artifacts in the Northwest was a point of real political significance. The Northwest had many invaluable ancient stone tablets, he said, some going all the way back to the Qin and Han (221BC-220AD). In He's opinion, the presence of such artifacts was "but one reason why developing the Northwest is a matter of utmost importance to our country's [policies]."[217] At the end of this sentence, a classical Chinese term for "statecraft" (*jingshi*) was crossed out by hand in He's script; we do not know what term He spoke instead, but the conspicuous edit leads us to wonder whether he opted for something along the lines of "domestic policy," so as to avoid any suggestion that the Northwest was not fully part of China.

From there, He laid out the case—geopolitical, economic, demographic, mineral, infrastructural, civilizational—for a dramatically increased state presence in the Northwest, or *Xibei*. Rather than dwelling solely on the material benefits, He painted frontier development Romantically as the fulfillment of China's historical destiny:

> "Xibei," as it is known, is adjacent to the high steppe and the former lands of the States of Qin and Jin, and includes Mongolia, Xinjiang, Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia, Suiyuan, Shanxi, Shaanxi, and other areas. Scholars of geography tell us: the physical formation of our country's territory can be divided into five periods; the arc that is now Mongolia and Xinjiang once lay under an ocean, but in more recent times has dried up to become the deserts of today. Historians tell us: all nomadic peoples eventually became agriculturalists on the model of the Han, the

[215] Original phrase: *Shan dong chu xiang, shan xi chu jiang* 山东出相山西出将.

[216] See for example Sigrid Schmalzer, *The People's Peking Man: Popular Science and Human Identity in Twentieth-Century China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

[217] He Yingqin, "Kaifa xibei zhi wo jian [My Views on Developing the Northwest]," (1932), KMT Archives (Taipei), General Collection 449/20.

> foundation of the Chinese nation [*zhonghua minzu*]. Originating east of the Pamirs, they followed the Yellow River Valley toward the Pearl and Heilong, became imperial subjects, and multiplied. They survived the periods of the Yongjia Strife and Jingkang Strife, and gradually, Manchus, Mongols, Hui, and Tanguts [Tibetans] became homogenized into the great Chinese nation of today.
>
> In light of this, we should understand the development of the Northwest in terms of three concepts. First, due to the many transformations its land has undergone, "Xibei" is of course a geological treasure chest. Second, the rivers of "Xibei" are few and its climate continental, so the economic activity of the Republic has only sluggishly begun to enter into the lives of the nomads there. Third, while "Xibei" is like a basket the Chinese nation must drag along by hand, it is also a vast territorial buffer protecting that Chinese nation.[218]

With regard to defense, He reminded the audience that Mongolia and Xinjiang bordered on Soviet Russia, whereas the southwest bordered on British India. The recent breakaway of Outer Mongolia, he said, should alert the Chinese to the issue of border defense. With regard to minerals, he remarked that the Altai Mountains "might as well be called the 'Golden Mountains,'" that the Gurbantunggut Desert of northern Xinjiang contained alluvial gold deposits, that Shanxi had rich stores of coal, and that Shaanxi and Gansu had a lot of oil. With regard to Chinese "civilization," He remarked that Chang'an's long status as the capital again showed the centrality of the Yellow River valley to Chinese civilization. He specified that a great change had occurred in the Sui and Tang: before that point, the "culture was purely that of the Han" (*chun hanzu de wenhua*). During the Tang, however, "Hui, Tibetan, and other cultures fused together in the same furnace, melding influences from Buddhism, Confucianism, and other religions."[219] In short, ruling and developing the frontiers required that the GMD and its supporters articulate such a narrative of frontier peoples and their beliefs becoming Chinese.

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[218] He, "Kaifa Xibei." Events referred to are the "Yongjia Strife" (永嘉之乱, 307-313) and "Jingkang Strife" (靖康之乱, 1126-27).

[219] Ibid.

He ended with two prescriptive points. First, developing the Northwest would provide a useful conduit and incentive for "migration and frontier colonization" (*yimin zhibian*). Xinjiang, he noted, had only 0.5 percent the population density of Jiangsu, while Gansu, Qinghai, and Inner Mongolia were virtually "lands without people" (*kongdi*). Detailed employment records of the main frontier development organization confirm that this initiative brought large numbers of Han male laborers, to the supposed *terra nullius* of the Northwest during the early 1930s.[220] Second, He continued, the most pressing issue was to identify human and material resources with which to implement the Northwest development plan. "At present," he said, "too many of our journalists and scholars are living in the populous and affluent southeastern regions, or in the comfort and protection of the foreign settlements. They ought instead to go to Xibei and use their knowledge to make a real contribution."[221] At a time when the state lacked the ability to train large numbers of its own officials and dispatch them to the faraway frontiers, it was crucial to solicit the collaboration of intellectuals and others to support the project of frontier governance. If such individuals possessed some knowledge of frontier peoples and their culture—as was the case with urban Chinese Muslims—all the better.

The "Northwest Problem" (*Xibei wenti*), as it was known at the time, became a permanent concern of state policy upon the GMD's consolidation of the national government at Nanjing in the late 1920s.[222] Much of the discussion of this problem was driven by the Chinese

[220] For example, *Kaifa Xibei xiehui huiyuan lu* [*Membership Roster of the Northwest Development Association*] (Nanjing: 1934).

[221] He Yingqin, "Kaifa Xibei."

[222] General discussion of a "Northwest Problem" (*Xibei wenti*) in the Chinese press predated the Northwest Development Plan by over two decades: the topic dates to 1908, whereas the exact term first appeared in 1918. Before the early 1930s, however, such mentions were relatively sporadic and tied to specific incidents: anything from foreign powers' real and potential designs on the territory to natural disasters affecting the region's populations.

press. The weekly *Xibei wenti* ("The Northwest Problem," 1932-35) introduced the "politics, economics, culture, and history of Xibei…in order to provide a theoretical basis for developing the region," while the more specialized *Xibei wenti jikan* ("Northwest Problem Quarterly," 1934-36) published employment rosters and survey findings, and discussed in greater depth issues of national defense, foreign policy, education, and religion. Meanwhile, among China's elites at this time, a dissenting position maintained that "China" really meant the Han and that the government should not waste resources on the far-flung frontiers.[223] In the Nanjing Decade, therefore, proponents of frontier development had to make their case on multiple levels to China's dramatically expanded post-imperial reading public.

By the early 1930s, a concerted group of frontier developmentalists began to articulate the "Northwest Development Plan" (*Kaifa Xibei jihua*) discussed by He.[224] The state's embrace of development as the solution to the Northwest Problem was institutionalized in June 1932 with the establishment of the Northwest Development Association (*Kaifa Xibei xiehui*). According to the Association's constitution, its purpose was "to assist the central government in bringing the Northwest to the same level of development and prosperity as the national community as a whole."[225] The Association's ambitious 1932 inaugural plan listed seven main components:

1. Mineral Extraction (to include surveying, exploratory stratigraphic drilling, and extraction)
2. Infrastructure Development (to include railroads, highways, telegraph and telephone, radio, and airlines)
3. Hydraulics (to include irrigation and dam systems)

[223] Such disagreements had occurred at earlier points, as when Zuo Zongtang made his case to skeptics at the Qing court regarding the necessity of reconquering Xinjiang. See Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, p. 126.

[224] The number of mentions of the Northwest Problem and related terms in the period 1930-39 was highest of any time before the twenty-first century, increasing nearly eightfold compared to the period 1920-29. By comparison, the reliable control-variable term "China" (*zhongguo*) increased by less than a factor of two in the same timespan.

[225] Kaifa Xibei Xiehui, *Kaifa Xibei xiehui di yi jie nianhui baogao shu* [Report of the First Annual Meeting of the Northwest Development Association] (Nanjing: Kaifa Xibei xiehui, 1933), p. 23.

4. Agriculture and Forestry Improvements (to include labs, nurseries, and "livestock bases" for horses, cows, sheep, and camels)
5. Factory Construction (products to include electricity, machinery, spinning and weaving goods, canned food and milk, noodles, and soda)
6. Internal Immigration and Opening Land for Cultivation (to include "wasteland reclamation," "surplus population resettlement," disaster victim relief, organization of "land reclamation garrisons" [*tunken jun*])
7. Educational Facilities (to include primary, teacher training, specialized, vocational, and agricultural and industrial schools)

It is important to pause here and note the ways in which the ostensibly scientific and value-neutral language of development concealed direct impact on the Muslims of the Northwest. As with modern infrastructural development anywhere in the world, activities such as mining, highway construction, commercial agriculture, and relocation of settlers (in this case the abovementioned Han laborers, who were often from Hunan or refugees fleeing the Japanese occupation of the Northeast, referred to in Point 6 above) would necessarily displace Muslim, Mongol, Tibetan, and other local populations. As with more familiar examples of settler societies, the designation of pre-settlement areas as uninhabited "wasteland" enabled ignorance of local peoples and conditions.

The Chinese frontier developmentalists resembled, and in many cases were directly connected to, their counterparts in other countries. They were engineers, geologists, agriculture and forestry experts, businessmen, and government officials. The plurality had studied in Japan, primarily at the Tokyo Imperial University. Others studied in the United States or Europe, or at one of the several new Western-style universities in China.[226] Upon graduating or returning

[226] Those who studied in the United States attended Cornell, MIT, Columbia (including the Columbia School of Mines), the University of Iowa, the University of Illinois, the University of Southern California, the Yale Forestry School, the Colorado School of Mines, and the University of Pittsburgh Swanson School of Engineering's petroleum program (the world's first, established in 1910). Those who stayed in China studied at Peking University, Qinghua University, Jinling University, Beijing Jiaotong University, Yanjing University, Beijing University of Agriculture, and the National Sun Yat-sen University School of Agriculture. Data drawn from *Kaifa xibei xiehui huiyuanlu* [*Membership Roster of the Northwest Development Association*].

home, they based themselves in urban power centers such as Nanjing, Beijing, and Shanghai. This well-connected group were not simply technocrats spreading an increasingly globalized gospel of efficiency and technological progress, but also self-consciously sought to apply new ideas and techniques to the old problem of how much and what kinds of control a Chinese state could exert over its frontiers. Tellingly, Chinese frontier developmentalists made considerable effort to synthesize Qing-era knowledge of the frontiers, especially that of the *Lifan yuan*, or "Barbarian Affairs Bureau" (institutional predecessor to the Republican Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission, discussed below)—even as they imported works by Western scientists, explorers, Orientalists, Turkologists, Tibetologists, and so on.

The Northwest Development Association's titular director was Chen Lifu (1900-2001), a top GMD official and conservative ideologue close to Chiang Kai-shek. Chen had received a master's degree in mining engineering from the University of Pittsburgh in 1924, where he focused on coal and wrote a thesis titled "The Mechanization and Electrification of the Chinese Mining Industry." After that, he briefly worked as a coal miner in Scranton, Pennsylvania.[227] A consummate modernist and staunch nationalist, Chen formed a lasting impression in western Pennsylvania of the significance of mineral and industrial development for a country's material strength. In China, he served in the Northwest Development Association's mining division, in addition to his work as director.

Several additional GMD officials and other top figures supported Northwest frontier development. While Chiang Kai-shek appears not to have been personally involved, his assistant Mao Qingxiang was an active member from the beginning. Prominent agriculturalists such as

[227] *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, Vol. 3, p. 207; Ch'en Li-fu, *The Storm Clouds over China*, pp. 35-36, 38-41 (digital edition). Several additional GMD officials and other top figures supported Northwest frontier development, including the abovementioned general He Yingqin (1890-1987) and the banker Kong Xiangxi ("H.H. Kung," 1881-1967), both of whom were also close to Chiang Kai-shek.

Liu Yunchou, Xiao Zheng, Dai Hong, Zhang Jingyu, and others supported the Association's founding and management. Engineers and geologists also played a large role. One such individual was Zhang Renjian (1897-1976), who earned an M.S. from the Colorado School of Mines in 1921, followed by further study at Columbia University (probably the School of Mines), and by the early 1930s was serving as director of the Natural Resources Survey Office in his native Henan Province. Zhang was the principal author of the Northwest Development Association's inaugural plan.[228] In addition, the banker Kong Xiangxi ("H.H. Kung," 1881-1967) supported developing Northwest commerce and infrastructure, and lobbied the Executive Yuan during the war on behalf of the region's salt and wool industries—the latter being a traditionally Muslim sector in which Muslim warlord Ma Fuxiang had also invested.[229]

The Northwest Development Association's concrete accomplishments remained limited. On the other hand, the involvement of so many top officials and other high-level personnel makes the Association significant as an expression of the priorities of the state in the early to mid-1930s. Resembling today's "public-private partnerships," the Association mobilized numerous private human resources, but answered directly to the central government in Nanjing via the Northwest Development Commission. The Central Party Bureau, Ministry of Interior, and Ministry of Education provided funding and helped connect the Association with appropriate sources of expertise.[230] In its first year, the Association received a modest 2,957 yuan from the

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[228] Zhang Zhaozi (a.k.a. Zhang Renjian), *Kaifa xibei shiye jihua* [The Northwest Development Plan] (Nanjing: Kaifa Xibei xiehui, 1934), p. 1.

[229] *Kangzhan shiqi xibei kaifa dang'anguan shiliao xuanji* [*Selected Historical Documents on the Development of the Northwest during the War of Resistance Period*], pp. 31-34; Millward, "The Chinese Border Wool Trade, 1880-1937."

[230] Kaifa Xibei xiehui, *Kaifa Xibei xiehui di yi jie nianhui baogao shu*, p. 15. The Central Party Bureau connected the Association with participants in the Northwest exploration missions, the Ministry of Interior connected it with

Military Affairs Commission, Central Party Bureau, and member dues and donations; it spent half that sum on preparations and fact-finding, and saved the other half.[231] At first, the Association would recruit personnel and conduct preliminary surveys of minerals and other natural resources—not unlike the missions Sven Hedin and other European scientists and adventurers had undertaken in the preceding decades. Future revenues would be supplied by the state-run "Colonization Bank" (*Tuozhi yinhang*), private banks, and a system of rural land credits to be established.[232] While neither the 1932 inaugural plan nor the first annual report mentioned foreign funding, a 1931 article in the *Development Committee Bulletin* (*Jianshe weiyuanhui gongbao*) discreetly admitted, without further specification, that foreign loans would play some role, as they had in earlier stages of frontier development in the last two decades of the Qing.[233]

In one of its more robust initiatives, the Northwest Development Association resumed work on the Longhai Railroad (*Long-Hai tielu*), one of the clearest expressions of the durability of multiple Chinese states' interest in developing the frontiers. China's equivalent of the Transcontinental or the Trans-Siberian, the Longhai line was far shorter than its American and Russian siblings, but arguably much more challenging to construct. As its name suggests, the Longhai line connects Lanzhou in Gansu Province (traditionally called *Long*) and the port city of Lianyungang (traditionally called *Haizhou*), north of Shanghai. Construction began in the last decade of the Qing and was briefly continued under the Beiyang government. The Nanjing

participants in land reclamation surveys being carried out in Ningxia, and the Ministry of Education connected it with leading Chinese chemists.

[231] Kaifa Xibei xiehui, *Kaifa Xibei xiehui di yi jie nianhui baogao shu*, pp. 19-20.

[232] Zhang, *Kaifa xibei shiye jihua*, pp. 12-13.

[233] "Kaifa xibei jihua (san): Xibei tuozhi yinhang ji qi huodong [The Northwest Development Plan: III: The Northwest Colonization Bank and its Activities]," *Jianshe weiyuanhui gongbao* [*Development Committee Bulletin*], 1931, no. 16, pp. 324-25. This should not come as a surprise, for officials involved in frontier development were known to advocate using foreign loans to support China's development. See for example Chen, *Storm Clouds*, p. 30.

government extended the line from Lingbao, Henan, to Baoji, Shaanxi, between 1931 and 1936, and then to Tianshui, Gansu, by 1945. The final 348 kilometers to Lanzhou was only completed in the early years of the People's Republic, by 1953. While this project brought numerous Han laborers westward in the early twentieth century, it also saw some early examples of Muslim participation in frontier development. From 1923 to 1931, under the Beiyang and GMD governments, the young Chinese Muslim Ma Tianying, future GMD diplomat to the Middle East and Southeast Asia (see Chapters Four, Six), worked as head storekeeper of Longhai's Xuzhou and Haizhou supply houses.[234]

On the whole, discrepancies between the Association's mid-1932 inaugural plan and first annual report of mid-1933 reveal that it was not in a position to act on many of its proposals. After the first year, it was already becoming more of a lobbying organization promoting the idea of frontier development than an apparatus for actually implementing specific plans.

As already indicated, controlling territory and extracting resources—to say nothing of meeting deadlines—were not the only motives for developing the Northwest. Rather, ideological considerations of the "nation's history and civilization" also played a role.[235] Statements by Chiang Kai-shek, He Yingqin, Chen Lifu, and other GMD leaders clarify that frontier development was seen not only as a question of geopolitical necessity, but as a matter of national destiny. Despite its limited capacity, the GMD state asserted the political and racial unity of all the peoples living within the former Qing boundaries, and on the basis of that notion sought to remake frontier peoples in a Sinicized, nationalistic image. This assimilationist policy required a

[234] "Biographie: Ibrahim Tien Ying Ma," Ma Tianying Papers (Kuala Lumpur) MTY.C12 C500002; "Ma Tianying," Ma Tianying Papers (Kuala Lumpur) MTY.C12 C500005.1; "Longhai tielu guanli ju zhiyuan zili zhengmingshu [Longhai Railway Management Bureau Certificate of Employment]," Ma Tianying Papers (Kuala Lumpur) MTY.C12 C500005.7.

[235] Zhang, *Kaifa Xibei shiye jihua*, Ch. 1 passim.

revised narrative of the historical relationship between those frontier peoples and the sedentary society of eastern China. For example, in August 1943, as he was preparing for the Cairo Conference, Chiang Kai-shek took a moment to telegram his ministers reiterating several points about territory, minorities, and the nation that had been circulating for some time, but only published in his book, *Zhongguo zhi mingyun* (*China's Destiny*), in March of that year:

> The Chinese people are distinct from one another in terms of ancestry, but are not different from one another in terms of race. The Wuhu were outsiders. The Yuan and Qing were also barbarians from the north. The southern Man tribes of the Zhou were also barbarians. But the people of the so-called Huiyi borderlands were all descendants of the Fiery and Yellow Emperors. The same is true of those now known as Manchus, Mongols, Hui, and Tibetans. Now they are all members of the Chinese nation. "Mongolia" and "Tibet" are merely names of places. "Hui" is the name of a religion. "Manchu" was originally the title of Nurhaci. His son Hongtaiji changed the name to 'Qing,' but this was not even officially the name of any place. When our founding father [Sun Yat-sen] spoke of nationalism, he meant the nationalism of the *whole* country [*guozu zhuyi*], not just that of a single group [*minzu zhuyi*]. This is made very clear in my book. Again, we are speaking of different *groups* [*zongzu*], not different nationalities [*minzu*]. When our founding father spoke of nationalism, he really meant *nation-statism*.[236]

The assertion that China consisted not simply of the Han race, but of multiple races "fused" over time with the Han, became less sustainable the more GMD control of the largely non-Han frontiers eroded. Broadly speaking, this is what was at stake for the GMD in the Northwest.

From Warlords to Muslim National Institutions

Chinese Muslim elites acutely perceived these stakes and responded in a manner that served their interests. Northwest development provided them a structure and a vocabulary for giving something to the state and receiving something in return. It also offered a framework through which they could claim to speak for all the communities of Muslims in China, without necessarily seeking those communities' approval or consent. By the early 1930s, frontier issues

[236] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 13.

were becoming a regular topic of discussion in Chinese Muslim periodicals, in parallel to GMD official statements and the national press, with Chinese Muslim authors adopting the state's terminology and its concerns. In an article titled "Northwest Development and Chinese Islam," a Muslim author asserted that "China is the only country where Islam remains dispirited and listless," and that "the state-led development of the Northwest could be a vehicle for revitalizing Chinese Islam."[237] Whereas the frontiers represented a test of the GMD government's sovereignty and legitimacy, for Muslim elites they represented an opportunity for words and deeds whereby to perform loyalty to the nation and bind themselves to the highest levels of the government.

Muslim leaders moved early to seize the opportunity of Northwest frontier development, for its potential to strengthen their material position and political clout. For example, not long after the establishment of the Northwest Development Association, the Qinghai-based Muslim strongman Ma Bufang cabled the central authorities recommending that the Association's work in Qinghai be made to include: (1) the founding and subsidizing of "Mongolian-Tibetan frontier schools," which despite the terminology would also focus on local Muslim populations (see below) (2) government support for local wool- and hide-making factories, a Muslim-dominated industry (3) similar support for the local horse-breeding industry, interestingly "to be reformed in keeping with American techniques" (4) the founding of a veterinary hospital, given that the previous year had seen a devastating outbreak of cattle plague that had killed 200,000 head and, at 10 yuan each, had cost Qinghai 2 million yuan.[238] Even when significant central government

[237] Liu Chunrong, "Kaifa xibei yu zhongguo huijiao [Northwest Development and Chinese Islam]," *Yisilan qingnian* [*Muslim Youth*], 1934 no. 4, p. 21. I am grateful to Aaron Glasserman for directing me to this article.

[238] "Ma Bufang guanyu kaifa xibei ying zai Qinghai biandi sheli gongchang, xuexiao deng wenti de ti'an [Ma Bufang's suggestions that Northwest development in the Qinghai frontier should establish factories, schools, etc.]," November 1933, in Ma Zhendu, ed., *Kangzhan shiqi xibei kaifa dang'an shiliao xuanbian* [*Selected Archival*

support did not materialize, Ma Bufang took advantage of Qinghai's relatively unscathed wartime status to import industrial and agricultural management practices from the United States and elsewhere throughout the 1930s and 1940s. At the same time, Ma also encouraged the influx of both modernist and conservative orthodoxizing Islamic thought via local Yihewani (i.e. Ikhwani) *ulama* who had visited the Hijaz, as well as at least one Arab sheikh who journeyed to Qinghai in 1934 to "teach the Wahhabi doctrine" under Ma's aegis.[239]

Muslim warlords such as Ma Bufang not only benefitted from Northwest frontier development, but helped guarantee the territorial security that allowed the GMD state to pursue that development in the first place. This relationship between the Ma warlords and the central government in fact predated the Republic by four decades. In 1872, Ma Zhan'ao helped bring an end to a tumultuous period of Muslim uprisings against the Qing by switching sides to support the government. Ma Fuxiang (1876-1932), grandson of Ma Zhan'ao and the most important Northwest Muslim figure of the early Republican era, transformed his forebears' pro-Qing stance into a pro-Republican one. Moreover, Ma Fuxiang's career and relationship with Chiang Kai-shek transformed an earlier imperial style of governance in which the center relied on local strongman-clients into a post-imperial style in which those strongmen were formally incorporated into the institutional structure of the nation-state.[240]

Documents on Northwest Development during the War of Resistance] (Nanjing: Second Historical Archives of China, 2015), pp. 17-18.

[239] Merrill Ruth Hunsberger, "Ma Pu-fang in Chinghai Province, 1931-1949" (PhD dissertation, Temple University, 1978); "City in West China to Get Piped Water: American 'Sells' Warlord at Sining on System to Aid Health—People Suspect Clear Fluid," *The New York Times*, 3 February 1947; Mohammed Turki al-Sudairi, "Adhering to the Ways of Our Western Brothers: Tracing Saudi Influences on the Development of Hui Salafism in China," *Sociology of Islam* 4 (2016): pp. 35-36. Al-Sudairi identifies the former Gansu Naqshbandi (Sufi) imam Li Wenqing and the Yihewani imam Ma Debao as leading proponents of *al-da'wa al-salafiyya* in Ma Bufang's Qinghai.

[240] Lipman makes this argument in *Familiar Strangers*, Ch. 5, in the section "Becoming a National Figure."

Ma Fuxiang's biography is worth reiterating to the extent that it epitomizes that process of institutionalization. Educated in both the Islamic and Confucian classics, Ma began his long military career serving under Dong Fuxiang, a Han commander of Muslim loyalist troops, during the Muslim revolt of 1895-96; in the conflict, Ma's forces reportedly killed thousands of Muslim rebels and sent their heads to Dong. Soon thereafter, Dong's army was transferred to Beijing, where it fought successfully against the Eight Nation Alliance during the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901) and came to be known as the "Gansu Braves" or *Ganjun*. Ma gained command of the Ganjun cavalry following the death of his elder brother Ma Fulu. This force not only participated in the Battle of Peking (1900) and the siege of the foreign legations, but also escorted the imperial family when it fled to Xi'an. For the next two decades, Ma held various semi-autonomous posts throughout the Northwest under the Qing and Beiyang governments, first as de facto governor of Kokonor (Qinghai) and then in Altai (both 1912), and later as military governor of Ningxia (1913-20) and Suiyuan (1921-24). He spent much of the 1910s in a power struggle with the Jahriyya Sufi order, though after Jahriyya leader Ma Yuanzhang's death in 1920, he had more leeway to focus on expanding education and infrastructure in Suiyuan. Edward Slack has confirmed suspicion that Ma profited in the 1920s from Suiyuan's rampant opium trade.[241] Meanwhile, Ma had also established Sino-Arabic schools across Ningxia as a counter to the Jahriyya; these would become a model for later Muslim education reform efforts (see below).[242]

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[241] Slack, *Opium, State, and Society*, p. 31. Slack states that according to U.S. Department of State records concerning China (1930-39), Ma had made approximately US$2 million from taxing opium trade, which he used to offset military expenditures.

[242] Ning Wen, "Ma Fuxiang yu huimin jiaoyu [Ma Fuxiang and Muslim Education]," *Xibei huizu yu yisilanjiao* (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1993), pp. 263-69. One of the first of these was the Ningxia Mongolian-Muslim Teacher Training Academy (*Ningxia Meng-Hui shifa xuexiao*), founded in 1918 by Ma Fuxiang.

Ma's connection to the GMD originated during the Northern Expedition, when he and his son Ma Hongkui fought under Feng Yuxiang's Guominjun. In 1929, Ma broke with Feng and joined instead with Chiang Kai-shek. At this time, Ma was appointed to the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission (*Meng-Zang weiyuanhui*, hereafter MTAC), serving as deputy director under Zhao Daiwen from September 1929 to August 1930, and as director from then until December 1931.[243] In 1930, he was also appointed governor of Anhui and a member of the Central Executive Committee of the GMD. News coverage celebrating Ma Fuxiang's exploits in the Northwest appeared throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s, especially in *Xinwen bao*, part of a process Lipman characterizes as "becoming a national figure." Ma frequently put forth his own views in the periodicals of the MTAC, as well as in his work *Conditions in Mongolia and Tibet* (*Meng-Zang zhuangkuang*, 1931), which he opened by stating in no uncertain terms that "China absolutely cannot cause Mongolia and Tibet [shorthand for the frontiers as a whole] to break away from China's territory, and Mongolia and Tibet cannot reject China to become independent."[244] After Ma's death in August 1932, Ma Hongkui received command of his father's army, the governorship of Ningxia, and a post in the MTAC.

When Ma Fuxiang died, Chiang Kai-shek composed an obituary poem, "In Honor of Ma Fuxiang," published in the Military Affairs Commission's magazine:

> The lion of the Northwest,
> A tower of tremendous energy,
> Departs this world as destiny demands,
> Yet lived a hero's life.
> An old friend
> Who treated all with utmost sincerity,

[243] "Meng-Zang weiyuanhui zuzhi youguan ziliao [Materials Pertaining to the Formation of the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission]," KMT Archives (Taipei) 一般 561/8.

[244] Ma Fuxiang, *Meng zang Zhuang kuang* [*Conditions in Mongolia and Tibet*] (1931), available in Pickens Collections, Box 33, Pamphlet Case 5; translation in Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, p. 167.

A just and loyal servant of the nation
Who moved others with honesty,
He leaves his mark on history, Chinese and beyond…
His will above all was for peace.[245]

While this poem fails to mention that Ma was a Muslim, that fact nevertheless silently heightens the impact of Chiang's praise. Given popular stereotypes of Muslims as a disloyal and restive Other, each line of this poem becomes more remarkable when the implicit is made explicit: Ma was a hero who helped the government stabilize the Northwest *despite his being a Muslim*; he served the nation with loyalty and honesty *despite his being a Muslim*; he wished for peace *despite his being a Muslim*.[246] From Chiang's perspective, this was not only a descriptive eulogy for an important national figure, but a prescriptive statement that a "good" frontier person was one who displayed loyalty toward and welcomed assimilation into the nation-state. Chiang composed this obituary in late summer 1932, just as the Northwest Development Association was beginning its work.

Ma Fuxiang's career exerted a centripetal force that pulled other important Muslims into the orbit of the state. Under Ma, the MTAC became an instrument for deputizing prominent Muslims in service of the state. The most important example of this was the government's reliance on Muslim warlords and officials throughout the 1930s in its mostly unsuccessful attempts to control the affairs of Tibet. In June 1930, a conflict known in English as the "Sino-Tibetan War" broke out when the Dalai Lama's forces attempted to gain more exclusive control over monasteries in the contested territories of Kham (now western Sichuan) and Amdo (now

[245] Jiang Zhongzheng [i.e. Chiang Kai-shek], "Ji Ma Fuxiang wen [A Commemoration of Ma Fuxiang]," *Junshi zazhi* [*Military Affairs Magazine*] 1932, no. 46, pp. 130-31.

[246] In particular, "peace" was significantly both a recurring theme of Muslim self-descriptions (in fact, Chinese Muslims often translated *al-Islam* simply as "peace," or *heping*), and at the same time, code for accepting the rule of the central government (unlike some of Ma's own ancestors who had risen up against the Qing).

southern Qinghai).[247] Ma Bufang and Liu Wenhui (the non-Muslim military governor of Sichuan) eventually defeated the Tibetans in battle in July-August 1932, pushing them back to the Jinsha River, after which pressure from the British in India led to ceasefire and a settlement.[248] Before embracing Ma and Liu's military option, however, the GMD attempted its own negotiated solution through the good offices of the MTAC, with equally heavy reliance on Muslim cooperation. In January 1931, Ma Fuxiang sent his Muslim deputy Sun Shengwu (1894-1975) on a fact-finding mission to the region. The details of this earlier mission are unknown.[249] Shortly thereafter, Ma made plans to send Tang Kesan, another Muslim MTAC member, to resolve the conflict in Kham.

Tang Kesan (1882-1950) epitomized the Republican era's older generation of urban eastern Muslims who made a career out of the frontiers. Born in Zoucheng, Shandong, Tang was educated in the final years of the traditional exam system and belonged to a lineage of scholar-officials characterized as "Confucian in form, Muslim in content" (*nei hui wai ru*).[250] Moreover, his great-grandson and biographer states that Tang "frequently quoted portions of the Quran and

[247] The event was and is known in Chinese as the "Kham-Tibet Conflict" (*Kang-Zang jiufen* or *Kang-Zang chongtu*).

[248] Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, p. 172. This was an important precursor to the GMD's attempt to consolidate power in the region by forming the separate province of "Xikang" (1939-50, comprising the traditional Tibetan territory of Kham, later reabsorbed as the eastern portion of the Tibetan Autonomous Region and the western portion of Sichuan Province).

[249] "Meng-Zang weiyuanyui pai Sun Shengwu deng diaocha Kang-Zang chongtu an [The Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission sends Sun Shengwu et al. to investigate the Kham-Tibet Conflict]," KMT Archives (Taipei), 一般 440/3.226. While present in the catalog, this file was listed as "not found" when requested for viewing in May 2015. Sun was a Beijing Muslim who participated in the municipal government and directed the city's "Northwest School" (*Xibei gongxue*).

[250] Tang Shuxun, "Tang Kesan de jiafeng, yexu yu yihan [Tang Kesan's Family Background, Achievements, and Regrets], in *Cheng de da cai*, pp. 176-78. His paternal grandfather Tang Chuanyou (d. 1900) rose from humble beginnings to become an accomplished calligrapher who, like many "Han Kitab" scholars of the late Ming and Qing eras, advocated the expansion of Islamic writings in the Chinese language. His father Tang Chenglie (d. 1905) served for thirty years as a Qing official in Sichuan and Shaanxi.

Hadith regarding the importance of patriotism."[251] Like his father, Tang served first as an official in the southwest, working for the salt ministry in Sichuan and Yunnan in the early 1910s; in 1916, he briefly headed provincial tax collection in Gansu.[252] Soon thereafter he was selected as a member of parliament. From then through the mid-1920s, he worked primarily in Shandong politics. In 1925, he established the Chengda Academy with Ma Songting, operating at first near his home in Jinan, and later in Beijing. In 1930, during Ma Fuxiang's directorship, he was appointed a section chief in the MTAC; he remained a member of the organization well after Ma's death.[253] During the war, Tang founded the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Association along with Bai Chongxi, Ma Songting, and others. As the Association's deputy director, he was instrumental in organizing the Chinese Muslim wartime diplomatic missions as well as coordinating anti-Japanese propaganda among Muslims in Gansu, Ningxia, and Qinghai.

Tang Kesan's mission to Kham, which lasted from March to September 1931, indicates both the GMD's reliance on Muslims and the stakes of that relationship for the Muslim community. Tang left a record of his Tibetan assignment in his *Diary of a Journey to Kham* (*Fu Kang riji*), published in Nanjing in 1934. In it, he provides the following summary:

> In the third year of my service to the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission, when the Mongolia Conference had ended and the Tibetan Conference was about to begin, and the [Thirteenth] Dalai Lama's representative had arrived in Nanjing for the meeting, all those who care about the affairs of the Tibetans hoped that the problem of Tibet could soon be resolved. Who could have expected that at that moment, the Dajinsi and Bailisi Incidents would erupt and expand into the Kham-Tibet Conflict, a violent episode detrimental to the Tibetan Conference? For this reason, the central government gave me special orders to travel to Kham to

[251] Tang Shuxun, "Tang Kesan de jiafeng," pp. 177-78.

[252] Frontier tax collection could be a treacherous occupation, if Edgar Snow's account of Muslim life in northern Shaanxi is to be believed. Snow states that Republican tax collectors elicited "considerable enmity" from the local population "before the Reds arrived," relating the story of one unfortunate tax collector who was executed following a mass trial after he had pretended to be working for the Communists. Snow, *Red Star*, p. 316.

[253] *Meng-Zang weiyuanhui zhiyuanlu* [Employee Roster of the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission] (October 1936).

> investigate and resolve the situation. At this point, the Dalai Lama had already cabled the central government requesting them to send an impartial high-level official well-versed in the conditions of frontier peoples to call upon the Tibetan forces to withdraw and restore the status quo ante bellum. I accepted the assignment, attending to it secretly and urgently. I immediately packed up and set off. Before I reached Sichuan, towns across Garze and Zhanhua had already fallen in succession to hostile forces. When I reached Kangding, I conducted multilateral negotiations with the Tibetans. When a translation was provided to the Dalai Lama, he stubbornly refused to withdraw his troops, for the reason that Garze and Zhanhua were already under his control, and cited also the importance of the Dajinsi and Bailisi. I argued back forcefully on just grounds, going back and forth several times, but with no resolution after six months. At that point, the 18 September Incident in Shenyang created a difficult situation for the central government…they said to settle the issue of the Dajinsi and Bailisi, and postpone all other discussion. I was forced to cease work short of my goal, and agreed only a temporary ceasefire with the Tibetans.[254]

How significant was it that that government relied on a Muslim official to address the situation in Tibet? At the very least, it seems significant that Tang was chosen over Buddhists such as Dai Jitao or Taixu, both of whom were busy lobbying the Tibetan and Chinese sides for a peaceful resolution.[255] Scholars have briefly noted Ma Fuxiang and Tang Kesan's involvement in the conflict, but have not addressed the question of their Muslimness (indeed, that this question would be regarded as negligible speaks to the synonymy Chinese Muslims achieved between their interests and those of the state). The stakes of this question rise, however, when we consider the long-standing policy during imperial times of playing minority peoples against each other in the task of frontier governance.[256] Without the government documents regarding Tang's mission, we can only hypothesize that the relevance of his Muslimness for the state lay in a similar logic of "divide and rule." Meanwhile, the relevance for Muslims lay in showing their interests to be

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[254] Tang Kesan, *Fu Kang riji* (Nanjing: Xin Yaxiya, 1934), pp. 1-2.

[255] Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, pp. 172-78.

[256] Jacqueline Armijo-Hussein, "Sayyid 'Ajall Shams al-Din: A Muslim from Central Asia, Serving the Mongols in China, and Bringing 'Civilization' to Yunnan (PhD diss, Harvard University, 1997); Perdue, *China Marches West*.

identical to those of the state, and in asserting that their loyalty set them apart from the Manchus, Tibetans, and Uyghurs, at the exact moment in the early 1930s when all three of those groups appeared to be breaking away.[257] In other words, as with Chiang Kai-shek's obituary poem for Ma Fuxiang, the fact that Tang's Muslimness was formally a non-issue was part of the point. Tang clearly reinforces this privileged position when he affects indignation at the Tibetans' ill-timed attack, when he proclaims his own "impartiality," when he portrays the Dalai Lama's demands as unreasonable (in contrast to the "justice" of the government's position), and when he complains that the Mukden Incident unfortunately cut short his otherwise sound mission.[258]

Tang's failed diplomacy of 1931 and Ma Bufang's military intervention of 1932 would not be the last time the GMD enlisted Muslims to address Tibetan issues. The GMD supported Ma Bufang's invasions of Tibet on multiple occasions into the 1940s.[259] Even more significantly, in 1939, the central government and the MTAC (then under Wu Zhongxin) coordinated with Ma Bufang to arrange protection for the four-year-old Lhamo Thondup, by then identified as likely to be the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, on his journey from Xining to Lhasa. Essentially holding the family hostage and receiving considerable compensation from both the Chinese and Tibetan sides, Ma Bufang put his relative Ma Yuanhai in charge of the convoy, which consisted of Ma Bufang's troops as well as, interestingly, a Tibetan Muslim Hajj delegation. Once the convoy

[257] Zvi Ben-Dor Benite in *Dao of Muhammad* discusses a similar tendency by Ming- and Qing-era Muslims to argue that Islam was superior to Buddhism.

[258] This was not the last time Tang journeyed westward: "Tang Kesan shi guo Ping fu Ning [Mr. Tang Kesan passes through Beiping and continues to Ningxia]," *Yuehua* 8.2 (1936).

[259] Similar dynamics prevailed elsewhere in the frontiers at this same time, such as when Ma Zhongying crushed the East Turkistan Republic on behalf of the GMD in early 1934. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*; Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*.

arrived in Lhasa in October 1939, the boy was confirmed as the reincarnated Dalai Lama.[260] Understandably, the entire episode involved a tremendous amount of coordination between the GMD, its agents in the MTAC, Ma Bufang, Tibet, and the British.

Elite Muslims' intimacy with the GMD went hand in hand with efforts to leverage influence in the interest of their community. Muslims knew how to speak to the state in its own language, and how to write themselves into official ideology in subtle and palatable ways. By the early 1930s, a narrative of Muslims' peacefulness, of their "contributions" to China, and of the desirability of their (further) Sinicization was becoming increasingly ubiquitous, and increasingly merged with GMD terminology and political priorities. For example, on 17 December 1932, the Chinese Muslim Youth Society petitioned the third plenary session of the GMD Fourth Central Party Congress (and copied the MTAC), asking that the Central Committee for Organizations establish a "division for Hui organizations" (*Huimin zuzhi ke*). In support of this request, which essentially sought institutional recognition for the Chinese Muslim people ("Huimin") on equal footing with the Mongolians and Tibetans, the Chinese Muslim Youth Society submitted a list of rather direct points ingratiating Muslims to the government:

1. That Sun Yat-sen had established the Republic on the principle of equality between the "Five Races"
2. That it was "not religious differences, but rather linguistic and customary differences, each of which must be melted away in its own way, that made it difficult for the GMD to spread Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People among the Manchus, Mongolians, and Tibetans"
3. That it was necessary for the nation to "get revenge against the enemy" after the loss of Manchuria
4. That in light of Outer Mongolia's independence, the Sino-Tibetan Conflict, and the "Manchus' betrayal of the nation in the Northeast," the "British tigers and Russian eagles were now covetously eyeing the Southwest and Northwest," but that the Huimin were the "only ones who

[260] Academia Sinica Modern History Archives (Taipei), 11-29-26-00-013; Charles Bell, *Portrait of the Dalai Lama* (1946); Richardson, *Tibet and Its History* (1984); Thomas Laird, *The Story of Tibet: Conversations with the Dalai Lama* (New York: Grove, 2006).

continue to support the Han and their revolution," in keeping with the "age-old cooperation of the Han and Hui peoples"

5. That China's Muslims numbered "forty or fifty million" and that "because their educational situation remains backward, they are often unreceptive to our Party ideology, but the central government could instead make effective use of religious psychology in order to guide them and bind them to the center"
6. That if the government adopted this approach, "it would not be terribly difficult to transform the cherishing of religious morals into the cherishing of party-state psychology"
7. That "the large number of Muslims scattered across the Northwest are simple-minded and honest in character, and in light of the need to consolidate the development and defense of the Northwest frontier, there is no way forward but for the central government to smelt and cast the Huimin of the Northwest via the Three Principles of the People"
8. That the "nation's separatism crisis" had made the question of setting up Huimin organizations all the more urgent.[261]

This petition shrewdly wove appeals to principle and emotion together with hard-nosed advice and assessments of Muslim-GMD shared interests—not to mention a strong dose of condescension toward the Muslims' own Northwest coreligionists. Above all, the purpose of such statements was to indicate to the government that Chinese Muslims were its most natural allies among China's non-Han groups, and to present themselves as the intermediaries best positioned to help the government achieve its strategic objectives in the Northwest frontiers.

Muslim warlords' and officials' reputations with the GMD also carried weight in a wider variety of contexts. For example, in June 1937, Ma Ruye, the headmistress of Beiping's New Moon Private Muslim Girls' School and widow of Ma Fuxiang, submitted a petition to the Ministry of Education that cited prominent Muslims' work as part of a funding request.[262] Like

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[261] KMT Archives (Taipei), Meeting records collection 会议记录, 会 4.2/16.12.36. The number fifty million was cited ubiquitously among Chinese Muslims in this period. Original phrasing for No. 7: 中央对于西北边疆之开发边防之巩固舍镕铸西北回民于三民主义之下.

[262] Ma Fuxiang is reported to have had multiple wives, about whom little is known. The New Moon school was founded in 1935 by Ma Songting, Zhao Zhenwu, Wang Mengyang, and others connected to the Chengda Academy. Zhao, "Sanshi nian," p. 16.

other leading Muslims, Ma Ruye explained that China's Muslims numbered as many as fifty million, but that the educational level of this huge portion of the population was relatively low. With adequate educational opportunities, however,

> we will see the fruition of the positive cultural movement undertaken by the awakened Huimin of eastern China in the last decade, [which began] with former Ministry of Education official Ma Linyi, when he founded the Collective Progress Middle School (*Xiejin zhongxue*) in Hunan; with current MTAC member Tang Kesan, when he founded Beiping's Chengda Academy, in order to train qualified instructors; and with MTAC member Sun Shengwu, when he founded Beiping's Northwest School, in order to produce expert personnel to support the development of the Northwest…The seeds of Muslim girls' education, however, have not yet sprouted. I, Ruye, as an awakened woman of the Huimin, have therefore humbly followed my late husband Ma Fuxiang in dedicating myself to the cause of Huimin education.[263]

After referencing these important names and causes, Ma closed by requesting a subsidy of 500 yuan per month—a considerable sum at the time, though still far less than what the government supplied to Chengda (10,383 yuan in 1938 from the MTAC alone) and certain other Muslim schools—"to support the development of the other half of our population of fifty million, the Hui women, in pursuing their studies."[264] In this case and that of the Chinese Muslim Youth Society above, the narrative of Muslims' importance to China is mobilized in the context of making an administrative or financial request. On the other hand, Ma, much more so than the Youth Society, speaks to the state from a position of some authority: her letter implies that the government owes her a debt in light of her and her husband's service, and in light of the insufficient attention paid to female education among China's Muslims, which all sides could benefit from increasing.

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[263] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五(2) – 958.

[264] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五(2) – 958; *Meng-Zang weiyuanhui gongzuo baogao* [Work Plan of the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission] (1939), p. 7.

The examples of Ma Ruye and of the Chinese Muslim Youth Society point to a broader pattern. By the mid-1930s, Muslims in the eastern urban centers increasingly had to navigate their affairs through and with respect to the party-state. In particular, the New Life Movement, combined nationalism and cultural conservatism with new forms of social, organizational, and bodily modernity—in short, fascism—and mobilized society against domestic rivals, especially the Communists. This new ideological and organizational amalgam had specific consequences for Muslims.[265] As was the case in Chinese society generally, the more open intellectual and cultural inquiry that emerged in the May Fourth era and persisted into the 1920s and early 1930s was now cut short.

Leading Muslims in the urban centers responded to these new circumstances in the way they knew best: by anticipating the state's priorities, by affirming the consonance of Muslim and government interests, and by reflecting the state's own rhetoric back at it. New Muslim periodicals such as *Chenxi* ("Dawn's Light," 1935-38) and *Tujue* ("Surge Forward," 1935-48?), led this response. These and other periodicals were based in the capital Nanjing (as opposed to earlier centers of publishing in Beijing or Shanghai), which grew as a locus of Muslim activity in the 1930s. While these publications still contained some articles dealing with Islamic doctrine, the point was not exegesis for its own sake, but politicized apologetics: making Islam appear innocuous to a non-Muslim audience. These publications differed from *Yuehua* in that their main purpose was not to drive Muslim cultural renewal, but to present the Muslims of eastern China as the government's ideal partners in managing the frontiers and conducting diplomacy with the Islamic world beyond China: the twin sources of Muslim communal legitimacy. While *Chenxi* and *Tujue* made these points bluntly, *Yuehua* at this time also experienced a shift. It abandoned

[265] Tsui, "China's Forgotten Revolution."

the exuberant tone with which it reported successful efforts to connect with Muslims outside China in the early 1930s, and it also drastically scaled down its use of Arabic even before the war. The second purpose of these journals was to attempt, no doubt with little success, to make GMD ideologies and slogans relevant to a Muslim context. In fact, Chen Lifu wrote the first article of *Chenxi*'s inaugural issue, in which he explained the importance of the newly launched New Life Movement—but failed to mention Islam or Muslims by name a single time. It was not a coincidence that this inaugural issue also contained an article on "debating about the religion, but not about the country" (*zheng jiao bu zheng guo*), a new Muslim slogan that clearly prioritized national over transnational loyalties. The second issue of *Chenxi* followed up with an article by Lin Sen, chairman of the national government, on the concept of "governing the country through the party," or "building the party-state" (*yi dang zhi guo*). While Muslims had to adopt a defensive posture at various points in the early to mid-1930s, the fact that figures such as Chen Lifu and Lin Sen would publicly throw their weight behind them demonstrates how elite Muslims' loyalties were not under suspicion from the state's perspective (the next chapter will show that Muslims did not necessarily enjoy the same goodwill from Chinese society). Indeed, despite the more rigid intellectual and cultural atmosphere, Muslim-GMD relations continued unscathed throughout the mid-1930s.

These multiple processes of organizational and discursive institutionalization culminated in the early war years with the establishment of the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Association (*Zhongguo huijiao jiuguo xiehui*), an official organ intimately tied to the GMD leadership. This association mobilized Muslims and encouraged them to support the war, highlighted Muslim contributions to the national cause for non-Muslim audiences, and coordinated specific Muslim wartime efforts such as the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation

(*Zhongguo huijiao jindong fangwentuan*, 1937-39) and Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation (*Zhongguo huijiao nanyang fangwentuan*, 1939-41).

The Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation's leadership consisted of three dozen military figures, officials, diplomats, imams, scholars, and community leaders.[266] The common elements linking all these figures were their integrationist politics and their commitment to supporting GMD Northwest frontier development. Its director was Bai Chongxi, who was one of the war's most successful generals and who by the late 1930s had eclipsed Ma Hongkui as the primary patron of Chinese Muslims. The Association's senior supervisors included all of the so-called "Four Great Imams": Da Pusheng (1874-1965) of Shanghai, Wang Jingzhai (1879-1949) of Tianjin, Ha Decheng (1888-1943) of Shanghai, and Ma Songting (1895-1992) of Beijing. Its four deputy directors were no less significant. Besides Tang Kesan and Sun Shengwu of the MTAC, these included Ma Liang of Liaoning, a leading member of the Northwest Development Association, and Shi Zizhou (1879-1969) of Tianjin, an educator, GMD operative, and major advocate of translating the Quran into Chinese.[267] The Association's managers included several important names as well: Wang Zengshan (1903-61) of Shandong, head of the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation, and at various points a GMD official in Gansu and Xinjiang; Ma Tianying (1900-82) of Beijing, head of the Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation; Zhang Zhaoli another participant in the Near East Delegation; Ai Yizai, a patron of the Muslim community of Beijing; Bai Shouyi (1909-2000), one of the most important Chinese historians of the twentieth century, Muslim or non-Muslim; authors and editors, such as *Yuehua*'s Wang Mengyang and Li Tingbi,

[266] The roster of the organization is available in SHAC (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 130.

[267] Shi had taught Chiang Kai-shek's aide Zhang Lisheng and with the latter's encouragement became a member of the GMD party office in Tianjin. He joined the GMD's Tianjin party bureau and served the interests of Chen Guofu and Chen Lifu (the "CC Clique") in that city after the Mukden Incident; during the war with Japan he accompanied the government to Chongqing. During the Civil War, he fled with the government to Taiwan, where he eventually became director of the renamed Chinese Islamic Association (*Zhongguo huijiao xiehui*) .

as well as Shi Juemin, editor-in-chief of the Nanjing-then-Lanzhou-based paper *Muslim Youth* (*Huijiao qingnian*); and several Chinese Azharites including Sha Guozhen (head of the Chinese Azhar missions), Na Zhong (a prolific translator), and Ding Zhongming (future Taiwanese ambassador to Libya). Interestingly, while Chinese Muslims dominated the organization, at least one or two little-known Uyghurs also participated. This extraordinary collection of individuals represented the bulk of Muslim political, intellectual, and communal clout in Republican China. The careers of the abovementioned individuals aptly illustrate the confluence of interests between elite Muslims and the GMD, especially as forged in the crucible of frontier governance.

Intellectual Legitimation: The Fu'ad Library Project and Frontier Cultural Progress Association

In the more constrained political and intellectual atmosphere of the mid-1930s, Chinese Muslim elites sought to make their cultural activities, and the whole history and identity of Islam and Muslims in China, more legible to the GMD government. New forms of intellectual collaboration between Muslim and Han Chinese intellectuals emerged as a result. While numerous shared values and instances of genuine curiosity existed between the two groups, it would be a mistake to view intellectual collaboration independently from the all-encompassing questions of politics and territory. Unfolding before and during the war with Japan, these collaborations required, implied, produced, and institutionalized certain arguments about what Islam in China was—and even what Islam and China generally were—and precluded others.

One representative collaboration was the Fu'ad Library Preparatory Committee (*Fude tushuguan choubei weiyuanhui*) of the mid-1930s, in which Chinese Muslim leaders worked with well-known Han intellectuals and officials to house and expand a collection of classic Islamic texts bestowed by King Fu'ad I (r. 1922-36) and King Farouq I (r. 1936-52) of Egypt to

the Chengda Academy of Beijing, China's leading institution of Islamic education providing teacher training along combined Islamic modernist and Chinese nationalist lines.

The fifteen Han committee members were a superlatively credentialed group. The common themes between their careers were study abroad in Japan, Europe, or the United States; affiliation with one or more of China's new Western-style universities, particularly Peking University; and high-level direct or indirect service to the GMD government. Of these fifteen, the best-known were Cai Yuanpei, the educator and revolutionary who had studied extensively in Germany and France, served as minister of education in the early years of the Republic, and founded Academia Sinica, and Feng Youlan, the neo-Confucian philosopher who earned his PhD from Columbia University in 1924. The rest, though not quite as famous, were equally prominent. Some were officials, such as Weng Wenhao (the first Chinese to earn a doctorate in geology, "father of the Chinese oil industry," and later head of the Executive Yuan), Tao Xisheng (GMD minister of propaganda and secretary to Chiang Kai-shek), and Zhu Jiahua (GMD minister of transport, now remembered as a "pioneer of China's modernization"). Beyond this, most were professional scholars of various sorts. These included the accomplished historians Yao Congwu, who focused on Song and Yuan times and had produced the first complete translation of the *Secret History of the Mongols*; Zhang Xinglang, who translated Benedetto's *Travels of Marco Polo* and authored *The Geographical Basis of History* (which ought to remind us of He Yingqin's speech about Xibei); Gu Jiegang, the Peking University historian who traveled through the Northwest describing its geography and its non-Han peoples; and Chen Yuan, who wrote on the "three great religions" of Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam, and authored several works about Islam.[268] Another important subgroup were scientists and

[268] Zhang, *Chen Yuan*, pp. 54-55. See also Gu Jiegang's *Gan Qing wenjian ji*.

engineers: not only Zhu Jiahua, but also the physicist Li Shuhua and the chemist Li Linyu, both of whom studied in Paris and were instrumental in instituting science education in Republican China. The remaining Han members were Bai Pengfei, one of China's earliest legal scholars; Li Jinxi, an accomplished linguist, script reformer, and dictionary editor (and classmate and friend of Mao Zedong); Mei Yibao, an educator who had obtained his PhD in the United States, taught at Peking University, and briefly served as its president; and Xu Bingchang, who had studied philosophy at the University of Paris and taught at Peking University, but also served as the lead Chinese member of Sven Hedin's Sino-Swedish Expedition, known in Chinese as the "Northwest Study Expedition" (*Xibei kaochatuan*).[269] This worldly group of Han celebrities linked, and blurred the lines between, the more open, bottom-up intellectual exploration of the May Fourth era and the more constrained, top-down power aspirations of the Nanjing Decade.

The Muslim members of the committee were also highly accomplished. Among them were Ma Songting and Tang Kesan, leaders of the Chengda Academy, which trained *ulama* to teach in frontier schools and/or to pursue further study in Egypt; Zhao Zhenwu, editor-in-chief of *Yuehua*; Ma Linyi, an elder Muslim who had served as the GMD-appointed minister of education for Gansu Province in the 1910s; and Bai Shouyi, a scholar who was interested in the frontiers and who would later become one of China's most prominent historians in the PRC era. These Muslim leaders identified with their Han counterparts on both levels characterized above: that of developing positive knowledge, and that of expanding state power. The scholarly ethos did not counterbalance the statist one, however, but rather intertwined with it: Muslim leaders shared the GMD government's politicized espousal of neo-Confucianism; its emphasis on

[269] Basic data drawn from *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*.

modernization, rationality, and science; and its developmentalist, pedagogical, and Sinicizing prescriptions for the frontiers.

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In a basic sense, the Fu'ad Library's establishment was a matter of considerable pride for these Muslim leaders. The library building itself was located within the campus of Chengda Academy, adjacent to the Dongsi Mosque in Beijing (where Chengda had moved following the

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[270] *Yugong* (1934-37, Beiping, the "Chinese Historical Geography Semi-Monthly"), was edited by Gu Jiegang. *Xin Yaxiya* (1930-37, Shanghai, "New Asia") published multiple articles on China's frontier regions and on Islam.

[271] Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*, p. 139.

Japanese invasion of Shandong in May 1928). The structure was large for its purpose, and similar to other Qing- and Republican-era buildings in Beijing: an imposing two-story stone facade with slanted ceramic-tile roof, carved lintels, and wooden columns preceding the main entrance, above which hung a Chinese calligraphic inscription (unfortunately illegible in the only available photograph of the facade). On 30 September 1936, *Yuehua* published a front-page announcement that physical construction of the library, "longed for by those who care about Islamic culture," was finally complete. At this time, they also announced the participation of the abovementioned non-Muslim "cultural dignitaries" (*wenhua mingliu*) in the preparatory committee, whom Tang Kesan and Ma Songting had worked to recruit.[272] The reason for their involvement, the announcement stated, was to help pursue the "critical task of connecting Chinese and Arab cultures—that is, promoting mutual support between Muslim and Han…[which] naturally must be developed from both sides." The article added that these Han celebrities, particularly Li Shuhua, had a "clear understanding of Islamic culture and a sincere desire to support it," and that their participation was a "truly joyous occasion for our brethren, Muslim and non-Muslim alike." The article hoped that the Han celebrities, in these "days of serious national crisis," would be able to "convey their understanding of Islamic culture to court and commoner and to cultural leaders nation-wide" and would continue to support the "progress and development of Islamic culture…which had already made great contributions to China."[273] The first of these two aspirations was an oblique reference to recent instances of misunderstanding between Muslims and Han in China's major cities, some of which had turned violent (these will be discussed further in Chapter Three). The second aspiration laid the

[272] Kexing, "Fude tushuguan chengli weiyuanhui [Fu'ad Library Preparatory Committee]," *Yuehua* 8/27 (1936), p. 1.

[273] Kexing, "Fude tushuguan."

groundwork for further collaboration between Muslims and Han, singling out education as one of the most important areas where this further collaboration could take place.

The committee appears to have met in full on a single occasion, 22 September 1936, from 7 to 8p.m. Xu Bingchang and Ma Songting gave reports. The men sat at a single round table in one of the Fu'ad Library's modest rooms, adorned with Arabic and Chinese calligraphic scrolls. Despite the deference accorded to the Han members in the *Yuehua* announcement, they addressed one another as "brothers" (*xiongdi*). The Muslim leaders appear to have had the strongest prior relations with Xu Bingchang, who invited Chen Shuren and Weng Wenhao; Gu Jiegang, who invited Cai Yuanpei and Zhu Jiahua; and Tao Xisheng, who invited Bai Pengfei and Li Jinxi. The atmosphere was warm and the format collaborative: tasks were not segregated between Muslims and Han. That said, the relationship between Gu Jiegang and Bai Shouyi—that of a Han mentor and a Muslim apprentice—dominated the committee's work. In the course of the meeting, Gu, Bai, and Tang Kesan were elected as the group's standing committee. Meanwhile, Ai Yizai and Zhao Zhenwu would prepare the group's charter, but Gu Jiegang would edit it. Finally, the task of drafting a letter requesting additional books for the library also fell to Bai Shouyi (with Wang Mengyang's assistance), though Gu Jiegang reserved the right to edit this document as well. In addition to the Muslims' publishing the book request letter in *Yuehua*, certain Han members would see to its publication in several major nationwide periodicals.[274] News of the library's completion and the work of the preparatory committee also

[274] Chengda shifan chengli fude tushuguan choubei weiyuanhui [The Chengda Academy Fu'ad Library Preparatory Committee]," Yuehua 8.27 (1936), pp. 10-12. The publications were *Dongfang zazhi* (Zhang Xinlang's responsibility), *Guowen zhoubao* (Xu Bingchang's responsibility), *Shenbao zhoukan* (Feng Youlan's responsibility), *Shihuo* (Tao Xisheng's responsibility), *Da gong bao* (Yao Congwu's responsibility), and *Duli pinglun* (Gu Jiegang's responsibility).

appeared in *Yugong* (edited by Gu Jiegang) and *Tujue* (the Nanjing-based publication of by and for Chinese Muslims connected to the GMD government).

The letter crafted by Gu Jiegang and Bai Shouyi, ostensibly to request further book donations for the library, clarifies the multiple levels of consensus between the committee's Han and Muslim members regarding the outlines of Chinese Islamic history, Chinese Muslim identity, the role of religion in a modern nation-state, and the relationship of all this to the frontiers, education reform, and the integration and Sinicization of Islam and Muslims. The letter opened as follows:

> Islam in China is widespread. Its history already dates back over a thousand years. Today, the number of believers in all of China has reached fifty million. This long-standing history is the product of mutual influence, of constant give and take, between Arab civilization and Chinese civilization, which led to the creation of a type of inseparable civilizational collective [*bu neng fenge de wenming jiti*]. This huge Muslim population is a great pillar of the Chinese nation. It plays an indispensable role in the Northwest's frontier defense, safeguarding the country's lands. Thus, as pure, dispassionate research will show, from the perspective of the destiny of the nation-state, Islam in China is not simply a religion, but also brings even vaster territories into the equation. Clearly it is unlike other religions.
>
> Most non-Muslims do not pay close attention to these matters. What's worse, two to three centuries of deceptive policies by the [Manchu] ruling class erected curtains of obstruction between Muslims and non-Muslims, which exacerbated misunderstandings.[275]

Chinese Muslims' alleged "inseparability" from China and "indispensability" to controlling and developing the frontiers are the foremost operative ideas in this passage. As the thinking went, these two factors accounted for Chinese Muslims' unique status in the new nation-state. In light of this understanding of Islam's role in China, the next section of the letter explained the importance of Muslim educational reform:

> The Chengda Teachers' Training Academy's crucial mission consists of cultivating exceptional personnel to guide the religion…[It] was founded in the

[275] Cai Yuanpei et al., "Beiping Chengda shifan xuexiao fude tushuguan zhengshu qi [Book Request Letter on behalf of the Fu'ad Library of Chengda Academy]" (Beiping: 1936). This letter was printed in *Yuehua* and as a stand-alone document. Chen Yuan's copy is held in Beijing at the National Library of China's Old Books Section.

> fourteenth year of the Republic [and] struggled to develop in the face of difficult odds. After eleven years, its original ten students have grown to two hundred, its staff from six to twenty. Some of its graduates have been sent to Egypt to deepen their studies, while others have been sent to the provinces of the Northwest to work in Muslim frontier education. One must say that the special goal and special environment of Chengda is like the first ray of light in the dawn of Chinese Islam, and that it has an undeniable significance in the expansion of positive knowledge in China and the destiny of the nation-state.

In other words, the main purpose of Chengda was to use new knowledge imported from the Arab Middle East in order to train qualified individuals to work in the Northwest frontiers, transforming that region's predominantly Sufi Muslim populations, historically difficult to rule from the center, into loyal, quiescent, and conforming citizens of the new China.

The book request letter reiterated that training competent teachers and collecting library books remained Chengda's two most pressing tasks, and implied that the latter supported the former. In addition, it specified that the Fu'ad Library's materials "must be able to satisfy the interests not only of its students, but also of Muslim and non-Muslim scholars from outside its walls." Chengda's goal, in the words of the letter, was to make the Fu'ad Library the "foremost library of Eastern Islam." To accomplish that goal, however, they would need more books and a greater variety of books. Interestingly, the letter notes that the books received from King Fu'ad were "all in Arabic, and the quantity was not that great." For this reason, Chengda also sought new and old Chinese books as well as foreign books on Islam. The letter closed by expressing Chengda's "hope that the development of this large Islamic library will strengthen Chinese Muslim education and frontier education, that it will provide a new path forward for China's scholars, and that it will prove enlivening for the entire Chinese nation."

The letter contains certain elisions worth noting. The first is the absence of any attempt to convey the spiritual dimensions of Islam, and Islam's construal instead as a "civilization" (*wenhua* or *wenming*). The conception of Islam as a civilization rendered Islam conveniently

commensurable with Chinese civilization, facilitating the argument that Muslims had over the centuries become Chinese. A second, related omission lies in the privileging of the Arab origins of Islam. By leaving out Islam's circuitous path through Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and beyond, Gu Jiegang, Bai Shouyi, and their counterparts could more easily convey a linear progression in which the history of Chinese Muslims began in Arabia but ended in China. Both of these creative misconceptions parallel Middle Eastern Muslim thinkers' dialogue with Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: the power of Europe and of its concept of civilization led to historically based counterarguments that Islamic civilization had "contributed" to the rise of Europe and that recovering a lost "Arab essence" was the key to Islamic renewal in modern times. In the Republican Chinese context, conceptualizing Islam as a civilization rooted in Arabness affirmed for a non-Muslim Chinese audience Islam's innocuousness, as well as its compatibility with and subordination to "China." The letter's statement that Chinese- and foreign-language books would be a useful addition to Fu'ad and Farouq's exclusively Arabic texts betrays that a main purpose of the Fu'ad Library project was to render Islam legible, in the most literal sense, to the Han and the GMD.

In sum, the Fu'ad Library project in general rendered the Muslim processes of text collection described in Chapter One innocuous and useful to the state, and the book request letter in particular encapsulated the birth of a politically expedient narrative of Chinese Muslim identity. As the letter stated, the core of this narrative was the notion that Muslims were "inseparable" from and "indispensable" to China: that is, not foreign and not a threat, which popular Han stereotypes often held them to be. Their history, so the thinking went, consisted of a teleological path toward Sinicization, during which they had contributed meaningfully to Chinese civilization in multiple ways—strategically, culturally, intellectually. The work of

Chengda itself continued this all-important Muslim "contribution" (an idea explored further in Chapter Three).

War with Japan accelerated the activation of these imperatives. For example, in the "Frontier Cultural Progress Association" (*Bianjiang wenhua cujinhui*, 1939-44) directed by Chen Lifu, a separate but related group of Muslim and Han thinkers and officials worked to gather strategically significant cultural knowledge of the frontiers and produce effective propaganda toward them.[276] In contrast to the Fu'ad committee, the Frontier Cultural Progress Association was concerned less with abstract ideas, and more with formulating actionable plans for research and propaganda. The GMD formed such organs due to fears that the CCP or Japanese would outdo them in their outreach to frontier populations. The Frontier Cultural Progress Association sought to deepen the GMD state's knowledge of and collaboration with Muslims in order to conduct more effective propaganda on the frontiers. To this end, it meticulously collected books and periodicals, conducted research and surveys, organized lectures and discussion groups, undertook outreach to local organizations, published multilingual propaganda, and supported frontier publications, bookstores, hospitals, movie theatres, and radio stations: strategies that resembled the GMD's processes of party-building throughout China, but with emphasis on ethno-religious elements that were not as relevant elsewhere.

The concrete accomplishments of the Frontier Cultural Progress Association, however, were probably less important than its symbolism: as the saying goes, personnel is policy. This Association connected the leadership of the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Association, including Shi Zizhou, Ma Liang, Wang Zengshan, Li Tingbi, and Zhang Zhaoli, with top

[276] Wang Zengshan appears to be the only figure who was involved in both the Fu'ad Library project and the Frontier Cultural Progress Association.

Chinese figures including Sun Fo (son of Sun Yat-sen and head of the Judicial Yuan), Kong Xiangxi, Dai Jitao (also active in the government's collaborations with Tibetan Buddhists), Wu Zhongxin (head of the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission from 1936 to 1944), Ju Zheng (a former 1911 Tongmenghui revolutionary and head of the Judicial Yuan), Kong Geng (another Tongmenghui member and publisher of the wartime journal *Minzu zhanxian*, "The Nation's Battle Lines), Zhang Ji (another early revolutionary and leading conservative GMD politician), Li Yizhong (secretary of the Ministry of Social Organizations), and Rong Xiang (a Mongolian member of parliament), in addition to Chen Lifu.[277]

The Fu'ad Library project and the Frontier Cultural Progress Association are two of the clearest expressions of shared interests between Muslim elites and the GMD, and the implications of those shared interests for the definition of Chinese Muslim identity. The narrative of Chinese Muslims' Chineseness, as well as the Muslim-GMD relationship behind it, were firmly in place by the mid-1930s. Soon thereafter, the demands placed on Muslims by the war with Japan created the conditions whereby that narrative and that relationship were fully instrumentalized in service of the nation-state, and whereby any alternative understanding of Chinese Islam and its role became unsustainable.

Frontier Education Reform: State- and Muslim-Led Efforts amidst War and Communist Competition

[277] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 1002. Other lesser-known but significant members of the Frontier Cultural Progress Association included Chen Wenjian from Jiangsu, a periodical editor for the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission; Zhu Yonghua from Hunan, an Arabic- and Uyghur-language editor for the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission; Chen Shi from Hunan, an assistant Arabic instructor for frontier schools; Jiang Guoguang, an assistant Arabic instructor from Xikang, also affiliated with the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission; Pan Jingchang from Nanjing, an assistant Arabic instructor at the Frontier Affairs Research Institute (*Bianwu yanjiu suo*); Sha Lei of Jiangsu, editor-in-chief of the Muslim journal *Muslim Masses Fortnightly* (*Huijiao dazhong banyuekan*); and Liu Chuan of Jiangsu, an editor for the journal *Northwest Muslims* (*Xibei Huimin*). It is impossible to confirm from surnames alone how many of these individuals were Muslim, but it is at least highly unlikely that the Arabic instructors could be non-Muslim.

War with Japan and the GMD's ongoing rivalry with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) greatly intensified collaboration between Muslim elites and the GMD government. State-led and Muslim-led educational reforms focused on the strategically crucial triangle between Ningxia to the north, Xining to the west, and Xi'an to the southeast. To the northeast of this triangle lay the Communists, encamped at Yan'an, Shaanxi, from 1936; beyond them lay the Japanese forces in Manchuria, whose agents regularly penetrated into China's northwestern frontier regions. Lanzhou, in the south-center of the triangle, was the origin of the Gansu corridor, the most passable route connecting eastern China to the more distant frontiers. If hostile forces—Japanese, Communist, or otherwise—were to attempt to cut the eastern regions (that is, those still under GMD rule) off from the frontiers, controlling this swath of land would be a top priority. The GMD hoped to harness both the "hard" power of the Muslim warlords and the "soft" power of the modernist *ulama* to keep this unforgiving territory under GMD control. The GMD and Chinese Muslim elites agreed: if the inhabitants of this region could be made to see themselves as Chinese through language instruction and patriotic indoctrination, they would be less susceptible to enemy schemes—or to rising up against the state as their forebears had done in the nineteenth century.

Concerns about the Communists were not unfounded. The CCP had come a long way in its relations with northwestern Muslims. In late 1936, nearing the end of the Long March, the Red Army had relied on local Muslims' assistance in their struggle against GMD forces. On 20 October, the CCP held a meeting with these Muslims at the Tongxin Great Mosque, an imposing Ming-era structure overlooking the Qingshui River.[278] Here, the two sides formed the Yuhai County Hui Autonomous Government of Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia—the CCP's first minority

[278] On the Tongxin Great Mosque, see *Xibei huizu yu yisilan jiao*, pp. 433-36.

autonomous government, which provided the model that would be applied throughout the country after 1949.[279] A placard commemorating the meeting hangs to this day over the entrance to the prayer hall. It is said that Tongxin's special connection to the CCP is why, of the one thousand or more Ming- and Qing-era mosques that once dotted Ningxia's landscape, this was the only one spared from destruction during the Cultural Revolution. (On the other hand, inside the prayer hall, on the back wall directly over the *qibla*, lies a calligraphic inscription of Quran 3:103, "Cling fast, ye one and all, and do not let go the great cord of God"—a verse often invoked to express the borderless unity of the Islamic *umma*, and one that might have been anathema to the CCP at the time, if only they could have read it.)[280]

About a year after the Tongxin meeting, GMD forces struck at the Yuhai Autonomous Government and succeeded in dismantling it. Needless to say, however, fear of CCP influence persisted. Although war with Japan brought renewed GMD-Communist cooperation, and although Stalin's support for Chiang Kai-shek required the latter to walk a fine line, GMD-CCP rivalry in the frontiers largely continued apace. As the American journalist Edgar Snow's rare account of life at Yan'an details, the CCP was actively training corps of Muslim soldiers—who appear to have shared a special dread and resentment for Ma Hongkui, with some citing Ma's harsh policies as their reason for joining the CCP ranks.[281] While this training was formally for

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[279] Erie, *Prophet and Party*, 290-91; also check Qiu 2009, quoted in Erie 291

[280] This Quranic verse, however, is used today in Chinese translation as the motto of the Chinese Islamic Association, founded by Chinese Azharites returned from Egypt. Today it is not understood as threatening, but in fact as being conceptually consonant with the PRC's notion of "national unity" (*minzu tuanjie*).

[281] Snow, *Red Star over China*, pp. 312-16. Snow writes: "I asked one commander why he had joined. 'To fight Ma Hung-kuei,' he said. 'Life is too bitter for us *Hui-min* under Ma Hung-kuei. No family is secure. If a family has two sons, one of them must join his army. If it has three sons, two must join. There is no escape—unless you are rich and can pay the tax for a substitute. What poor man can afford it? Not only that, but every man must bring his own clothes, and his family must pay for his food, fires, and lighting. This costs several tens of dollars a year.' Although these Red Moslem regiments had been organized less than half a year, they had already achieved considerable 'class consciousness,' it seemed."

the purpose of resisting Japan, it also allowed the CCP to establish its alternative ideology and approach to social organization among ordinary Muslims. Snow describes a conversation where he asked Muslim Communist soldiers how they would deal with wealthy landowning *ahongs* who sided with the GMD and could not be convinced to join the Communists. The soldiers replied, if such *ahongs* could not be persuaded, "'We would punish them. They would be bad *ahuns* [sic], and the people would demand their punishment.'"[282]

GMD-CCP competition also extended to frontier education. In 1938, the GMD Ministry of Education discussed "ways to guard against the expansion of CCP 'progressive activities' in Shaanxi and elsewhere."[283] The problem escalated over the following two years. In late 1939, the Executive Yuan alerted the Ministry of Education that they had intercepted CCP communications from Yan'an regarding an initiative by Mao Dun (1896-1981), the novelist and future PRC minister of culture, to establish a "Xinjiang Cultural Association" (*Xinjiang wenhua xiehui*), saying the Ministry of Education "must pay attention" to this issue.[284]

Mao Dun did indeed work in Xinjiang from March 1938 to April 1940, and then lectured at the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region Cultural Association until October 1940. He established the Xinjiang Cultural Association at Dihua (now Urumqi) shortly after his arrival in the region, in April 1938, serving as its director and section chief for fine arts. The Association's purpose was to "guide and harmonize the cultural progress of [Xinjiang's] ethnic groups, and support the development of culture across the province." Similar to GMD frontier initiatives, this

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[282] Snow, *Red Star*, pp. 314-15.

[283] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 15; Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 16. The GMD government conducted similar discussions at this time regarding CCP activities abroad. These documents were not available to view during the author's time in Nanjing in spring 2016.

[284] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 21. These were also not viewable in spring 2016.

Association researched local culture and antiquities, attempted to expand local education, and published materials translated into Uyghur, Kazakh, and Mongolian. It also conducted indoctrination alongside anti-Japanese activities.[285]

Rather audaciously, Mao Dun even took advantage of nominal GMD-CCP cooperation to publish an article about his Xinjiang experience in the inaugural issue of *Huijiao wenhua*, the Chongqing-based magazine of the GMD-affiliated Chinese Islamic National Salvation Association. In it, Mao explains that each of Xinjiang's fourteen minority nationalities (*minzu*) established its own "Cultural Progress Society" under the umbrella of the Xinjiang Cultural Association. The guiding principle of this "cultural work" in Xinjiang was to realize the goal of "ethnicity in form, socialism in content."[286] Each ethnic group would not only develop its own culture, but also develop a "new culture" fused with socialist principles. Significantly, Mao says that the constitution of each *minzu*'s Cultural Progress Society asserted the need to "do away with Han-centrism, narrow ethnic psychology, regionalism, and other incorrect tendencies"—a relatively direct critique of the GMD's entire approach to frontier governance.[287]

Mao closes his article by singling out one *minzu* whose cultural work was "already glorious and storied": the Chinese Muslims. Mao says that when Beiping's Chengda Academy and Shanghai's Islamic Normal School sent their students to study in Egypt, and more recently

[285] Liang Keming, "Xinjiang wenhua xiehui [The Xinjiang Cultural Association]," in Ji Dachun, ed., *Xinjiang lishi cidian* (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1994), p. 679.

[286] The exact original phrase was "Ethnicity in form, Six Great Policies in content": 以民族为形式，以六大政策为内容 *yi minzu wei xingshi, yi liuda zhengce wei neirong*. The Six Great Policies represented the core of Chinese Communist ideology during the Yan'an period. They included anti-imperialism (*fan di*), affinity for the Soviet Union (*qin Su*), equality of peoples (*min(zu) ping(deng)*), peace (*heping*), development (*jianshe*), and anti-corruption (*qinglian*).

[287] Mao Dun, "Tan Xinjiang ge huijiao minzu de wenhua gongzuo [On the Cultural Work of Xinjiang's Muslim Peoples]," *Huijiao wenhua* 1/1 (1941), pp. 4-6.

when our "Muslim compatriots" organized the Near East, Hajj, and South Seas Delegations, these efforts were of "great benefit to strengthening relations between our country and Muslim countries."[288] In other words, disregarding their strong ties to the GMD, Mao was implying that the recent work of the Chinese Muslims could be seen as consistent with the CCP's vision for an ideal minority nationality. This statement, combined with Mao's choice to publish his article in a Chinese Muslim periodical, could be seen as a provisional overture to the leaders of a powerful "minority" group, and an attempt to draw them out of the orbit of the GMD.

In short, the Communists, camped on Ma Hongkui's doorstep and spread throughout the Northwest frontiers, jeopardized not only the GMD government's basic control of territory, but also the legitimacy of its Sinicizing approach to frontier populations. Whereas the GMD envisioned the full-fledged transformation of frontier populations into loyal citizens fluent in written and spoken Chinese, the CCP's also flawed yet subtler model of minority "autonomy" attempted no such feat, instead allowing populations to retain the outward appearance of cultural and linguistic distinctiveness as long as those features contributed to the creation of a "new culture" and conformed to ideological and organizational strictures derived from Stalinist nationalities policy.

Ma Hongkui, Chiang Kai-shek, Chen Lifu, and other top officials discussed the GMD government's Northwest strategy at length in mid-1937, just before the outbreak of full-scale war with Japan, and at about the time of the GMD counteroffensive against the Yuhai Autonomous Government. On 29 May 1937, Ma Hongkui, son of Ma Fuxiang, sent a secret telegram to the Executive Yuan Secretariat warning that

> Japan (1) is planning to set up an independent Muslim state similar to Manchukuo in northern Chahar (2) is moving westward organizing the false Manchus and

[288] Mao Dun, "Xinjiang wenhua xiehui," p. 4.

> Mongol brigands and setting up Japanese instructors in their territories (3) is conducting broad propaganda among the Mongols of western Gansu and Ningxia, and giving material assistance to Mongol leaders there for the purpose of establishing self-rule, all of which is being carried out by Japanese spies (4) is conducting, at the same time, broad propaganda among the Huimin in western Gansu and all over Ningxia, encouraging them to band together in seceding from the central government and setting up a Huimin autonomous region. Kindly bring to the attention of the Military Affairs Commission [i.e. Chiang Kai-shek].[289]

After detailing conditions in Inner Mongolia, Ma turned to the situation of frontier Muslims:

> As for the Huimin, apart from the Uyghurs of Xinjiang, all Muslims are Han who believe in Islam. There is no difference between them and Buddhists, Christians, and other religious Han Chinese people. Their ancestors were merchants and scholars; there is no difference between them and the Han except in terms of what they eat and drink…I, Ma Hongkui, take it upon myself to ask the central authorities to pay special attention to the education of Muslims, as well as to improve education in every frontier province, city, and county, and at every level. Currently, among the younger generation of Muslims receiving instruction, a great many cannot tell right from wrong. Their belief in religion is strong, so many send their children to the prayer hall to study Arabic, [but] I would invite you to consider sending one or two Chinese language instructors to each of these schools. Add some basic citizenship education as well. This will strengthen their sense of patriotism.[290]

In the government's responding cables, one phrase in particular stands out again and again: "Ma asks the central authorities to pay special attention to the education of Muslims." On 5 July, two days before the outbreak of full-scale war with Japan, Chiang Kai-shek personally telegrammed his cabinet ordering them to "Act in accordance with Ma's suggestions."[291]

During Chen Lifu's tenure as minister of education (1938-44), the Ministry of Education attempted to act on Ma's advice. The ministry implemented numerous plans under the heading of providing "scholarships and preferential treatment" (*buzhu yu youdai*) for frontier populations. It

[289] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 958.

[290] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 958.

[291] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 958.

subsidized Mongol, Tibetan, and Muslim students to study at institutions in eastern China, even in the face of resistance from prominent Han Chinese educators who advocated reserving the state's resources for Han students. The ministry also conducted extensive surveys of educational conditions throughout the frontiers, which incidentally illustrated that the Ma warlords were far more successful than the GMD state at providing basic education.[292] As the war in Asia became internationalized in 1941-42, the GMD government's commitment to frontier education reform persisted and continued to evolve, displaying greater attention to "linguistic and cultural specificities." In particular, the category of "religion" was now more explicitly entering the picture. On 21 September 1942, Chiang Kai-shek sent a handwritten note to Chen Lifu: "Regarding the organization and guidance of cultural associations in the Northwest, we must in particular add more Mongol, Hui, and Tibetan associations, as well as Muslim and Lamaist religious ones."[293]

Perhaps even more than Chiang Kai-shek, Chen Lifu viewed frontier education through an ideological and unabashedly paternalistic lens. In his memoirs, Chen devoted only the following short section of the chapter on the wartime Ministry of Education to the topic of "educating the minorities":

> China's border regions in 1939 were inhabited by culturally deprived minority nationalities. A national conference on education adopted a plan to promote education in border areas and a program to implement frontier youth education. Education was to be limited to 'the inhabitants of Mongolia, Tibet, and other places whose languages and cultures are of a special nature.' Education was to foster national consciousness in accordance with the educational aim of the Republic of China, which was to unify our nation's culture. The border education program also tried to increase ordinary knowledge; improve work skills; upgrade life, physical culture, and health; and rigorously train people to defend against any invaders.

[292] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 990; 五 (2) – 938; 五 (2) – 996; 五 (2) – 997.

[293] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 997.

> In 1943 we started seventeen national elementary schools for school-age children in the border regions. Taking into account the special circumstances of wartime, we built national secondary schools, border middle schools, and border vocational schools to reach some 5,858 students, excluding students in laboratory schools. In 1939 and 1940 we sent individual groups to Chahar, Kansu, and Sinkiang and obtained recommendations for the Miao and Yi minorities in the Southwest. We also formed a Summer Border Service Corps, similar to today's Peace Corps, for university students by selecting teachers and students from universities to supply educational and medical services. On a higher learning level, we promoted specialized courses, studies, programs, and departments in border regional universities and colleges. In 1945 a national institute of border culture and education was instituted. Shortages of teaching materials, textbooks, and dictionaries were severe. There was a lack of teachers who possessed special knowledge of Mongolian, Tibetan, and Islamic languages, and there were few schoolhouses, recreational, athletic, or sanitary facilities. Yet I believe that one of the great influences of World War II on China was the new focus on the border regions, the minorities, and their welfare.[294]

Chen states plainly that cultural and ideological uniformity was the goal of the GMD's frontier educational reforms. This uniformity was to spring from education in Chinese language and script and indoctrination in patriotism and Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People. At the same time, Chen notes that unfavorable conditions plus the exigencies of war meant that frontier schools, where they existed, had to start with basic knowledge, practical skills, and physical education. Additionally, he acknowledges that even by the 1940s, the state had established only a limited number of schools. Most notably, he blames the less-than-ideal outcomes on a lack of teaching materials and instructors familiar with Mongolian, Tibetan, and "Islamic" languages. Chen's vague wording speaks to the state's lack of knowledge of frontier peoples. Furthermore, his imprecise reference to "Islamic languages" reveals his assumption that the languages of the frontier, from the perspective of the state, would only ever be conduits for inculcating the habits

[294] Chen, *Storm Clouds*, pp. 183-84. Chen's memoir was composed in English. His term "border areas" from this passage corresponds to *bianjiang*, which I have translated as "frontiers." In the preceding section, Chen had just finished complaining that the "liberal-left" Harvard professor John King Fairbank had unjustly accused him of crafting policies of "thought control," firing back that Fairbank was playing into the hands of the Communists.

of body and mind the GMD believed should constitute a modern Chinese citizen. That is, they should be loyal, patriotic, Chinese-speaking, clean, healthy, fit, vigilant, and (to a point) literate. For Chen, Muslimness, Mongolianness, and Tibetanness were at best a means to an end whose utility would evaporate in time.

Predictably, challenges to the successful implementation of the Ministry of Education's policies went beyond mere administrative difficulties. In March 1937, MTAC director Wu Zhongxin wrote an advisory note to the Ministry of Education relaying a report by Ao Jingwen, dean of the Beiping Mongolian-Tibetan Academy (*Meng-Zang xuexiao*), stating that a group of twenty-one students had submitted a petition to drop out and discontinue their studies effective that June. Wu's note continued: "Bearing in mind the difficulties already faced by Mongolian-Tibetan Academy students, the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission advises the Ministry of Education to implement in earnest the stipulations regarding preferential treatment of Mongolian and Tibetan students, and to encourage all universities to recruit such students. Convene these students three weeks after the semester has begun, and if they are not up to standard, move immediately to recruit new ones who will be capable of graduating." Wu condescended that "those who fail will inevitably feel disappointed at the missed opportunity," but that this was all the more reason for the Ministry of Education to encourage universities to expand their frontier student quotas, noting that the level currently stood at only "one or two per institution." He concluded by reminding the Ministry that these measures were meant "to accord with the overall aim of helping the government improve frontier culture."[295]

[295] Wu Zhongxin to Ministry of Education, 15 March 1937, Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 936.

Others raised similar concerns, but with the opposite recommendations. On 31 October 1938, Luo Jialun, dean of the National Central University, wrote to Chen Lifu noting that the number of frontier students graduating from eastern Chinese institutions was not meeting the level hoped for according to the Ministry of Education's "scholarship and preferential treatment" policy. Luo was confident that he understood the reasons behind the discrepancy: "For these frontier students, to whom we are required to give special treatment, the education they have received at home in the frontier provinces is backward and underdeveloped (*luohou*). How can we possibly deal with them in the same way as graduates of secondary education from eastern China? Their opportunities for higher educational attainment are few indeed." Unlike Wu Zhongxin, Luo concluded that frontier students were being set up to fail, and that the "scholarship and preferential treatment" programs were not only not worth the effort, but unfair to students from eastern China: "If frontier students are to attend eastern Chinese institutions and receive the same education as students from eastern China, then they must also receive the same treatment. In my humble opinion, in the interest of fairness, this temporary measure—which our institution has taken pains to enact—in fact still requires further thought."[296] Luo's opposition to affirmative-action policies for frontier students only thinly veiled a Han-centric position that asked why investment in the frontiers was necessary. The existence of such prominent detractors as Luo further indicates the weight the GMD government attached to frontier education. In the end, the sustained involvement in the frontiers advocated by Ma Hongkui and Wu Zhongxin won out over the objections raised by Luo.

Ultimately, top-down Sinicization remained the GMD's overall policy. Mirroring Chen's priorities, the government pushed for frontier Muslims (as well as Tibetans, Mongols, and

[296] Luo Jialun to Chen Lifu, Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五. (2) – 936.

others) to write and speak decent Chinese, to subscribe to Chinese nationalism and Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People, to accept the notion that all China's inhabitants constituted a single race, and to support China's cause against Japan as well as the GMD's struggle against the CCP. As Chen's memoirs indicate, however, the GMD's limited knowledge of frontier conditions—exacerbated by the earlier failure to complete the physical development of the Northwest and other regions—meant that many of their wartime frontier policies faltered in the early stages or did not even make it off the drawing board.

Muslim elites were institutionally, materially, and culturally better prepared than the central government to carry out educational reforms for frontier Muslims. The most prominent Muslim-led wartime education initiative came when imam Da Pusheng relocated his Islamic Teacher's Training Academy from Shanghai to Pingliang, Gansu, from 1938 to 1942. The Shanghai academy had been founded in August 1928 by Da Pusheng and his associates to provide instruction for Chinese Muslim schoolteachers along Islamic modernist lines, using texts that Da and others had collected abroad in Singapore, India, the Hijaz, and Cairo. The Shanghai school temporarily closed after the city fell to the Japanese in summer 1937, at which point Da undertook the Hajj.[297] When he returned in early 1938, he met with Chiang Kai-shek in Wuhan and "reported to him on the conditions he observed abroad during his pilgrimage, and expressed his hope that the GMD government could help him continue the work of the Shanghai Islamic Teachers' Training Academy in the interior of the country."[298] Chiang approved. An office was set up for the school in Xi'an in spring 1938 and classes began in fall of that year.

[297] Ma Rulin, "Pingliang guoli shifan xuexiao [The Pingliang Islamic School]," *Xibei huizu yu yisilanjiao* [*Islam and the Muslims of the Northwest*], p. 242.

[298] Ma, "Pingliang guoli," p. 242-43.

The significance of Da's work was abundantly clear. On 19 August 1938, the Military Affairs Commission (temporarily in Hankou) telegrammed Chen Lifu to say that Da Pusheng and Sun Shengwu were developing a system to train one *ahong* per mosque in order

> to guide the believers in learning classics and to conduct political training [*xunlian*]… because the enemy as well as forces in northern Shaanxi are trying to draw in the Muslim youth. Therefore, we must pay particular attention to Da's efforts to develop capable *ahongs'* and to move the Islamic Academy from Shanghai to Pingliang, Gansu…After graduation, they can be sent to all regions to take charge of religious affairs [*zhuchi jiaowu*], and even be dispatched to North China to work making contacts behind enemy lines. One hundred fifty individuals will receive training to start, and a sum of 2,300 yuan per month will be granted to Da Pusheng's school. This has been specially commanded by Zhongzheng [i.e. Chiang Kai-shek]."[299]

By April 1939, the government had completed its retreat inland to Chongqing. At this time, Chiang Kai-shek personally ordered the Ministry of Education to send Da Pusheng an additional 8,000 yuan for setting up his school in Pingliang.[300] Chiang quoted Da's telegram from February requesting only 5,000 yuan for food, clothing, books, and other necessities, but provided an extra 3,000 anyway, in addition to guaranteeing the monthly 2,300 yuan promised in August 1938. Perhaps this was a premium offered preemptively for Da's loyalty. However we interpret it, Chiang's generosity points to the emphasis the government placed on protecting the Northwest and to the trust placed (even at a price) in figures such as Da. Incredibly, Chiang—the leader of a large country fighting for survival in a world war—went so far as to inspect the itemized budget himself, approving the breakdown of Pingliang's 2,300 yuan per month for moving and travel fees, school and office supplies, school fees, books and periodicals, printing equipment, tea, medical supplies, exercise equipment, and uniforms.[301] The only reasonable explanation is that

[299] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 – 13055.

[300] Ma, "Pingliang guoli," p. 243. These funds were dispensed by the "Northwest Field Headquarters" (*Xibei xingying*).

Muslim frontier education reform was not at all seen as a distraction from larger concerns, but rather was seen as performing a vital role supporting the war effort. As the war dragged on and resources dwindled, government commitment to Da's school did not flag, but only increased.[302]

After the move to Pingliang, despite the high level of government support, Da struggled to recruit competent teachers and students and to implement his ideal curriculum, one that would include Chinese language education but also rigorous training in Islamic doctrine taught in Arabic. Ma Rulin, a Chinese Muslim instructor from Sichuan who moved to Pingliang in 1938 with his wife and two daughters to work at Da Pusheng's relocated academy, left a first-hand account of some of the day-to-day proceedings there. Ma reflected on his reasons for moving to Pingliang as follows: "I thought to myself: for one thing, working in national education [*minzu jiaoyu*] would be very meaningful for me, and for another, Pingliang is close to the frontier regions [*ju bianqu jiaojin*], so it would be easy for me to develop my credentials there." Ma and his family arrived in Pingliang by the end of November.

Not much more is known about Pingliang's personnel. Ma tells us that Pingliang recruited students primarily among the Muslims of Henan Province.[303] Unfortunately, we do not know if the school reached its goal of 150 students, and there is no additional information available on who the individuals they successfully recruited were. At the very least, however, the choice of Henan as the main region for student recruitment should confirm our impression that

[301] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 – 13055.

[302] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 – 13055; 五 – 13056. Minister of finance Kong Xiangxi wrote to the Ministry of Education in February 1940 to re-approve the 2,300 yuan per month. On 23 May of that year, Da wrote to Chen Lifu requesting 27,600 yuan, and on 20 October he requested an additional 3,200 yuan. On 11 March 1941, he requested an additional 42,060 yuan, and on 5 September another 30,000 yuan. In this final communication, however, he assented to a change in the academy's status from private to state-run.

[303] Ma, "Pingliang guoli," p. 243.

the government and the Muslim leaders viewed Muslims from China proper as being generally more in-line with the state than those living in the frontiers, who were the target population.[304]

The process of designing the curriculum sparked some disagreement and necessitated compromise. At first, the school offered only two classes, one accelerated and one basic. In the beginning, the school had "no more than six" instructors and three to four administrative staff. When Ma first met with Da, he suggested dividing the curriculum in two: one module would train the teacher-students to teach in primary schools, able to provide basic standard instruction including one to two hours a week of Islamic doctrine taught in Arabic (*Awen jiaoyi*), and the other would train them as *ahongs*. Ma says that Da agreed with his suggestion "somewhat begrudgingly" (it seems that Da had hoped for a more thorough focus on doctrinal training). According to Ma's suggestions, apart from the accelerated group, all classes would be primarily oriented toward the basic teacher training curriculum. The academy's instructors, however, were still not numerous enough, leading Ma to assume responsibility for all the courses where no other instructors had been appointed, including pedagogy, physics, chemistry, and biology and hygiene.[305] In short, the program Da and Ma hoped for remained out of reach. Ma does note, however, that each class sat for Arabic-language instruction in religious doctrine every day, and that the teacher-students were required to pray five times daily.[306]

Regardless of these curricular challenges, fact that Pingliang was more than an educational institution explains the government's high-level attention and support. The government plans for the academy stated that "After graduation, Pingliang instructors can be sent

[304] While of course a Han-dominated region, Henan had several old and well-established Muslim communities, such as Sangpo, home of the Chinese Azharite leader, imam Pang Shiqian. See especially Elisabeth Allés, *Musulmans de Chine: Une anthropologie des Hui du Henan* (Paris: École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2000).

[305] Ma, "Pingliang guoli," p. 243.

[306] Ibid.

to all regions to take charge of religious affairs, and even be dispatched to North China to work making contacts behind enemy lines."[307] The Pingliang academy thus served a crucial extracurricular function, representing GMD interests in a fluid and even volatile wartime frontier environment where government presence was otherwise light. Formally speaking, this was the second period of GMD-CCP cooperation (August 1937 to June 1946), but in reality, competition between the Nationalists and Communists continued apace. Pingliang coordinated with agents working on the frontiers, including those from CCP-controlled territory in northern Shaanxi.

Some of these CCP agents were Muslim. One such agent was Yang Jingren (1918-2001), who was born to a Muslim family from Lanzhou, joined the CCP in 1937, moved to Yan'an in 1941, studied at the Nationalities Section of the CCP-operated Northern Shaanxi School (*Shanbei gongxue minzu bu*), and performed several wartime roles coordinating between the Yan'an-based CCP and frontier Muslims. Yang later played a role in the PRC's pacification of Tibet in the 1950s. He eventually became one of the highest-ranking "Huizu" in the party, serving as vice-chair of the fifth through eighth sessions of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (1978-1998).[308] Ma Rulin recalls Yang's visit to Pingliang as follows:

> The Pingliang academy was relatively free to administer its own affairs, and interference by regional party members and government administrators played only a minimal role… the atmosphere was relatively free and open. For example, some intellectuals who came to us from regions affected by the war displayed particularly dynamic thought. A party official from CCP-controlled territory, Yang Jingren, came to Pingliang on behalf of the Gansu Hui Educational Progress Association [*Gansu huimin jiaoyu cujinhui*] to solicit funds for the Lanzhou Zhixing Middle School. During his visit to our campus, he gave a lecture about resisting Japan and saving the nation [*kangri jiuguo*], about democracy and unity

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[307] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 – 13055.

[308] "Yang Jingren tongzhi shishi [The Death of Comrade Yang Jingren]," *Zhongguo minzu bao* [*China Ethnic News*], 81/23 (October 2001), p. 1. Founded by the CCP in July 1937 to train cadres in Yan'an, the *Shanbei gongxue* is considered a forerunner to two prominent present-day universities, Renmin Daxue ("People's University," now in Beijing) and Xibei Zhengfa Daxue ("Northwest University of Politics and Law," now in Xi'an).

> [*minzhu tuanjie*], and about reforming and improving the lives of the masses [*gaishan qunzhong shenghuo*].[309]

We must regard Ma's positive tone toward the CCP agents with skepticism, given that his recollection was produced in the 1990s. Unsurprisingly, moreover, GMD documents from the time indicate that the government was not actually interested in robust cooperation with the CCP, but in blocking their efforts at every turn.[310]

In addition to navigating relations with the CCP in Yan'an and its Muslim representatives, the Pingliang academy also faced crucial tests in dealing with local Muslims. The most significant test came with the "Second Hai-Gu Muslim Uprising" of 1939, in which Muslims from the towns of Haiyuan and Guyuan rose up against GMD rule. The GMD had aggressively recruited soldiers and requisitioned supplies from the perennially hard-pressed local Muslim population and even coerced some into forced labor, upon which as many as twenty thousand local Muslims took up arms against the GMD. The GMD crushed the rebellion especially swiftly and ruthlessly because they believed it had been incited by CCP forces in

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[309] Ma, "Pingliang guoli," pp. 243-44. Other prominent Communists of Muslim background also visited Pingliang. Ma recalls a similar visit by Liu Yifu (刘屹夫), a Beijinger of Muslim origin who enrolled in the *Shanbei gongxue* in 1937 and joined the CCP in 1943. Starting in 1939, Liu was appointed deputy director of the Fifth Grain Provision Bureau for Shanxi, Chahar, and Hebei, and secretary of the "Combat Zone Anti-Japanese Resistance Compatriot Assistance Society." Liu held several positions managing electrical plants and electrification efforts throughout the north-northwest and northeast frontiers into the PRC period, and in 1979 was appointed secretary and director of the North China Electrical Research Institute (*Huabei dianli xueyuan*). Although little evidence exists regarding the role of Islam in Liu's life, we know that his will left a portion of his savings to the Xuanwuqu Hui Kindergarten (*Xuanwuqu Huimin you'eryuan*) in the Xuanwu District of southwestern Beijing. As for his wartime visit to the Pingliang academy, Ma Rulin recalls that, similar to Yang Jingren, "When Liu Yifu of the Beiping Hui Middle School, who relatively early on had joined the party and enlisted in the military, stopped by Pingliang, he also came to campus and spoke of the achievements of the Eighth Route Army.

[310] A search of the Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) Ministry of Education Collection conducted in spring 2016 yielded two pertinent files, both of which were not viewable by researchers. The files were 五 (2) – 15: "Jiaoyubu deng guanyu fangzhi Zhonggong zai Shaanxi deng sheng jiaoyu jie kaizhan jinbu huodong de wenshu [Ministry of Education documents re: guarding against Chinese Communist promotion of progressive educational activities in Shaanxi and other provinces]" (111 pages), and 五 (2) – 16: "Jiaoyubu guanyu pozhi Zhongguo Gongchandang zai haiwai xuesheng zhong kaizhang jinbu huodong de wenshu [Ministry of Education documents re: suppressing the Chinese Communist Party's promotion of progressive activities among [Chinese] students abroad]" (page count unknown).

Yan'an.[311] We do not know how many people were killed, injured, or otherwise affected by this conflict. What we do know is that the Muslim students and instructors at the Pingliang academy were forced to side with the GMD's pacification campaign against their local coreligionists. On one occasion they were ordered to go to the nearby hospital "to show appreciation to officials and soldiers of the GMD 97th Division who had been injured while suppressing the rebellious masses," even though some of their families had been "directly affected by the disastrous 'cleaning up' process."[312] The mood was grim:

> We often saw captive "bandits" [*feitu*] being escorted down the streets of Pingliang, among them everyone from an old *ahong*, white-whiskered and bent-backed, to a youth of only nineteen. At the school, every day we heard stories of the devastation as the towns of Haiyuan, Guyuan, Longde, and Huaping [today Jingyuan] were 'cleaned up'… Needless to say, [our students] were unable to focus on their studies. Some had to sell their possessions before returning to Pingliang to seek further help paying ransom for their detained relatives and ensuring their security.[313]

Ma suggests that the GMD was forcing Pingliang to side with the government against local Muslims, and that the school complied despite private disapproval. The school's hands were tied, regardless of how they might feel about the situation. They were obliged to cooperate with their GMD supporters against local Muslims, at least some of whom they knew personally.

The GMD and the military demanded active assistance as well as passive compliance, enlisting the Pingliang school in several initiatives in response to the uprisings. For example, Ma remembers that a "very tense" meeting was convened with the *ahongs* of nineteen local

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[311] Xie Shengzhong, "Hai-Gu huimin 1938-1941 nian sanci qiyi shimo (2) [A History of the Three Haiyuan-Guyuan Muslim Uprisings of 1938-1941]," *Ningxia daxue xuebao* 2 (1981), p. 94. The Hai-Gu uprisings have been cast in a positive light in PRC scholarship because they were presented as evidence of the "revolutionary spirit" of northwestern Muslims against an oppressive GMD.

[312] Ma, "Pingliang guoli," p. 244.

[313] Ibid. Recall that Haiyuan, Guyuan, Longde, and Huaping were four of the six Gansu counties identified as majority-Muslim by the abovementioned government surveys.

neighborhoods and a number of other local Huimin representatives, "in order to intimidate the Huimin of Pingliang not to be affected by the rebellious masses nor profess their support for their cause—almost as if the assembled Huimin were being regarded as the enemy." In the aftermath of the uprising, the Pingliang academy also complied with government instructions to send new (Islamic modernist, pro-GMD) Muslim instructors to Haiyuan and Guyuan, as part of the government's "reconstruction" policies in those areas.[314]

Ma does not say whether Da Pusheng ever shared any private objections to GMD policies, but he does note that he himself left Pingliang for a time after the Hai-Gu uprising, "because the school's expenditures were not public, because my relations with the headmaster [Da Pusheng] were worsening, and because I felt increasingly isolated and imperiled."[315] Ma apparently only returned to Pingliang in September 1942, to become headmaster after Da Pusheng had been elected as a GMD member of parliament. In the meantime, the Islamic school had changed to state-run status, becoming the "Eastern Gansu Teacher Training College." Muslims from Da and Ma's circles remained involved, however, including *Yuehua* author Wang Mengyang, who moved to Pingliang from Chongqing to take up Ma's former position. More Arabic courses were added in 1944 despite the school's new public status, but were abruptly removed in 1947. In 1949, the school was incorporated into the new Pingliang Teacher Training College, and thus formally ceased to exist.[316]

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[314] Ma, "Pingliang guoli," p. 245.

[315] Ibid., pp. 244-45.

[316] Ibid., p. 246.

One question remains: what specific ideological content were the GMD and its Muslim allies attempting to impart to frontier Muslims?

The GMD government, for its part, cannot be seen as simply "secular." Before the war with Japan, the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission (MTAC) for several years sought to portray the GMD government to frontier Muslims as an Islamically authentic and therefore politically legitimate regime, even as it pursued an overall policy of Sinicizing frontier populations. Facilitating these efforts, in the mid-1930s the MTAC gained the ability to print pro-state propaganda materials in Arabic. This new capability was most likely thanks to Zhao Zhenwu, managing editor of *Yuehua*, who purchased a set of moveable Arabic type from a Cairo-based publisher in late 1932 (see Chapters One and Four).[317] After all, the Chengda Academy, which published *Yuehua*, was funded largely by the MTAC. A 1939 MTAC work report states that it provided a total of 10,383 yuan to Chengda in 1938 (a huge sum at the time, though not nearly as much as Chiang Kai-shek would supply to Pingliang). As we know, the MTAC and Chengda were also linked through personnel: Tang Kesan, the dean of Chengda, had been an active member of the MTAC since Ma Fuxiang's tenure as director in 1929-32. In any case, in addition to its more frequent use of the Mongolian and Tibetan languages, the MTAC's journal *Meng-Zang yuebao* ("Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Monthly") began paying greater attention to Muslim-related issues, and publishing sections of its periodical in Arabic, in 1935.[318]

[317] Before Zhao's return from Egypt, even Muslim periodicals in China printed Arabic only by lithograph, and sparingly at that. After his return, *Yuehua* printed full passages or even pages of Arabic relatively regularly. Zhao, *Xixing riji*; "Buzhu bianqu xuesheng ji wenhua shiye [Subsidies to Frontier Students and Cultural Activities]," *Meng-Zang weiyuanhui gongzuo baogao (1939)*, p. 7, available in microfilm at National Library in Beijing. This same report mentions the need for publishing in multiple languages as well as for anti-Japanese wartime propaganda on the frontiers. It states that the MTAC provided funding in the same year to Ma Bufang's Qinghai Islamic Progress Association (*Qinghai huijiao cujinhui*) and twelve similar institutions, as well as 2,940 yuan to one or more "frontier society and education survey missions" (*diaocha bianjiang shehui jiaoyu*).

[318] Shi Juemin's *Huijiao qingnian* (*Muslim Youth*), which moved from Nanjing to Lanzhou in 1938, also published pro-state propaganda in Arabic.

The most common materials to be translated into Arabic were Chiang Kai-shek's speeches, news about the central government, and discussions of Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People. They also published photos of important governmental meetings captioned in all four languages, Chinese, Arabic, Mongolian, and Tibetan (see Figure 1).[319]

Figure 1. *Meng-Zang yuebao*'s use of Arabic. A photo of a governmental meeting commemorating the founding of the Republic, captioned in four languages. Source: National Library of China (Beijing).

Much more creatively, in 1935 the *Meng-Zang yuebao* also published a copy of an excerpt from the Ikhwan al-Safa (see Figure 3).[320] The Ikhwan al-Safa, or "Brotherhood of Purity," were a secret society of scholars and mystics active in early Abbasid Basra (circa 8th-10th

[319] A number of such translations are held in microfilm at the National Library in Beijing. For example, *Jiang weiyuanzhang wei tejiu kangzhan gao quanguo guomin shu: Han, Meng, Zang, Hui wen ben* [Director Jiang's [Chiang]'s remarks to the nation's citizens on protracted war: with text in Chinese, Mongolian, Tibetan, and Muslim languages] (Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission Publication and Translation Bureau, 1938); *Jiang zhuxi wei xianfa shishi xiejin hui chengli dahui zhici* [Chairman Jiang's [Chiang's] remarks at the founding conference of the Constitutional Implementation Cooperation Association: with text in Chinese, Mongolian, Tibetan, and Muslim languages] (Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission Publication and Translation Bureau, 1943). For the 1943 publication, the copy I found at the National Library of China in Beijing did not actually contain a "Muslim" (i.e. Arabic or Uyghur) section.

[320] *Meng-Zang yuebao* 3.5-6 (1935).

centuries AD) who recorded their thought for posterity in the monumental *Rasa'il ikhwan al-safa* ("Epistles of the Brotherhood of Purity"). As if speaking directly to its imagined Arabic-speaking Muslim reader, the *Meng-Zang yuebao* titled the section "This is an excerpt from the *Epistles of the Brotherhood of Purity*."[321] The *Meng-Zang yuebao*'s use of this excerpt raises numerous questions. First and foremost, we do not know how the MTAC came to be aware of the Ikhwan al-Safa, their history, and their texts. *Yuehua* had published one article in 1929 mentioning the history of the Ikhwan al-Safa, but this article was based on English sources rather than the *Rasa'il* themselves.[322] As a major work of Sufism, presumably the *Rasa'il* would have appealed to the predominantly Sufi Muslims of the northwest frontiers, but perhaps less so to the newly orthodox-minded eastern urban *'ulama*. Were the eastern *'ulama* and their allies in the government trying to demonstrate that they had a more thorough, more literate understanding of the history of Sufism than the northwestern Muslims? Or was this excerpt selected more randomly than that?

The content of the excerpt suggests that it was anything but random. It comes from the *Fasl fi bayan bad' al-khalq* ("Chapter on the Origins of Creation"), which is located relatively deep into the corpus of the Ikhwan al-Safa's *Rasa'il*. Crucially, the excerpt in *Meng-Zang yuebao* cuts out the first paragraph and a half of the chapter, including the title clarifying that the topic is the creation of humankind and their transition from prehistory to settled civilization. We are left with the following as the opening paragraph:

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[321] *Meng-Zang yuebao*, vol. 3, no. 5, p. 14.

[322] Zhiwu, "Huijiao duiyu shehui jinhua shang de gongxian [Islam's Contributions to Society]," Yuehua 1/6 (1929). This article did not make direct use of the *Rasa'il*, but rather was based on two English-language sources, H.G. Wells' *Outline of History* and Philip Van Ness Myers' *Mediaeval and Modern History*. Furthermore, the *Rasa'il* were not among the Arabic works listed in the Shanghai catalog, nor are they known to be among the texts used by northwestern Sufi brotherhoods (both discussed at length in Chapter One).

> There [i.e. on that peninsula], there was a nation of merchants, craftsmen, scholars, and all other manner of people, who migrated to that peninsula and wandered about. With time they found many trees and fruits, sweet waters, pleasant air, good soil, herbs and aromatics, grains and crops, all nourished by the rains of the sky. They also saw all types of animals, including those that migrate and graze, those that fly, those that prey upon and devour the others, and those that slither, creep, and crawl. They all lived harmoniously together, coming to know one another as friends and not quarreling with one another.[323]

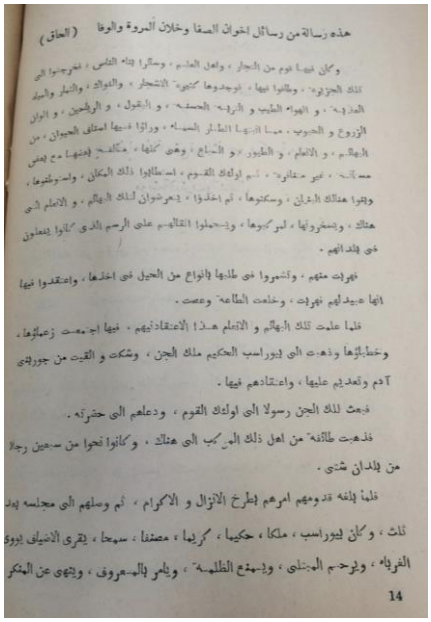
The antecedent-less pronoun "there," corresponding to *fiha* in the Arabic original, betrays that we are starting in medias res. With the topic of this chapter of the *Rasa'il* unknown to the theoretical frontier-based Muslim reader, the de-contextualization of the passage invites that reader to substitute his or her own context. Could the passage not serve as a subtle metaphor for Muslims' original settlement and acculturation in China? According to Chinese Muslim origin myths since the Ming, the first Muslims to come to China—like the earliest settled humans, who are the real topic of the original passage—were merchants, craftsmen, and scholars. Even Ma Hongkui referenced Chinese Muslims' ancestors being "merchants and scholars" in his abovementioned May 1937 telegram to the government. Furthermore, like the earliest humans who traveled in search of good fertile land, many of the first Muslims in China became sedentary agriculturalists (a particularly important theme in conventional dogma on Sinicization). And so on. Some of this was indeed historically true, but that is not the point. Compare the Ikhwan al-Safa excerpt to following poem from the end of the Ming-era work *Huihui yuanlai* (*On the Origins of the (Chinese) Muslims*):

> Formerly Islam was found only beyond the western border[s].
> Who would know that Muslims were to dwell in China forever?
> It only came about through the Tang emperor's dream in the night
> That three thousand men were brought to establish it.
> By imperial order the seal of the Board of Astronomy was given
> to one of them.

[323] *Fasl fi bayan bad' al-khalq* ["On the Origins of Creation"], *Rasa'il ikhwan al-safa* [*Epistles of the Brotherhood of Purity*].

They dwelt peacefully in China, pacifying the state.
All thanks to the grace of the emperor of the Tang for his fine
ritual treatment;
Even today we protect the state, not moving again.[324]

The real point, in other words, was to interweave a set of moral and historical themes whereby Muslims' integration in China could be rendered more palatable and meaningful, and whereby resistance to integration could be discouraged. Given Chinese Muslims' rich, centuries-long history of constructing politically expedient origin myths, it is entirely plausible that the Chinese Muslims employed by the MTAC were advising the *Meng-Zang yuebao* to adopt a similar strategy in reproducing the Ikhwan al-Safa excerpt. The only thing that seems to have changed from the Ming to the Republican era is the use of an Arabic text rather than a Chinese one.



هذه رسالة من رسائل اخوان الصفا وخلان المروة والوفا (العراق)

وكان فيها قوم من التجار ، واهل العلم ، وسافروا ببلاد الناس ، فخرجوا الى
تلك الجزيرة ، وطافوا فيها ، فوجدوها كثيرة الاشجار ، والفواكه ، والانهار والعيون
العذبة ، و المياه الطيبة و الرياض الحسنة ، و البقول ، و الرياحين ، و انواع
الزروع و الحبوب ، مما ترعى الطير السماء ، ورأوا فيها اصناف الحيوان ، من
البهائم ، و الانعام ، و الطيور ، و الدجاج ، وهي كثيرة ، متكاثرة ، بعضها مع بعض
متآلفة ، غير متخالفة ، ثم ان اولئك القوم ، استطابوا ذلك المكان ، واستوطنوها ،
وبنوا هنالك البنيان ، وسكنوها ، ثم اخذوا ، يحوشون اليها البهائم ، و الانعام التي
هناك ، ويستخرجونها ، ليركبوها ، ويحملوا اثقالهم على الرسم الذي كانوا يفعلون
في بلدانهم .

فهربت منهم ، وتنمروا في طلبها بانواع من الحيل في اخذها ، واعتقدوا فيها
انها عبيدلهم فهربت ، وخلعت الطاعة وعصت .

فلما علمت تلك البهائم و الانعام هذا الاعتقاد فيهم ، فيها اجتمعت زعماؤها ،
وخطباؤها وذهبت الى فيوراسب الحكيم ملك الجن ، وشكت و القيت من جوربني
آدم وتعديهم عليها ، واعتقادهم فيها .

فبعث لذلك الجن رسولا الى اولئك القوم ، ودعاهم الى حضرته .

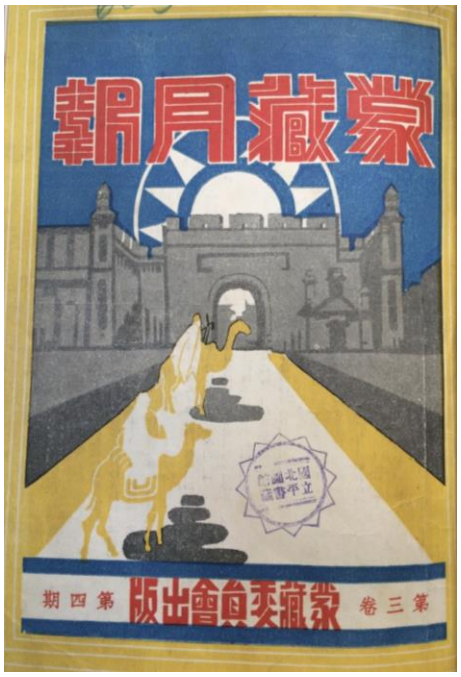
فذهبت طائفة من اهل ذلك المركب الى هناك ، وكانوا نحوا من سبعين رجلا
من بلدان شتى .

فلما بلغه قدومهم امرهم بطرح الانزال و الاكرام ، ثم وسلهم الى مجلسه بعد
ثلاث ، وكان فيوراسب ، ملكا ، حكيما ، كريما ، مصقعا ، سمحا ، يقري الاضياف ويروي
الغرباء ، ويواسي المبتلى ، ويسمح الظلمة ، ويأمر بالمعروف ، وينهى عن المنكر

14

Figure 2. *Meng-Zang yuebao*'s use of Arabic and Islam. Reproduction of an excerpt from the *Epistles of the Brotherhood of Purity*. Source: National Library of China (Beijing).

[324] Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, p. 206. As Benite notes, a version of the poem is also translated in Broomhall, *Islam in China*, p. 64. The original can be found in *Huihui yuanlai (zhengli ben)*, p. 53.



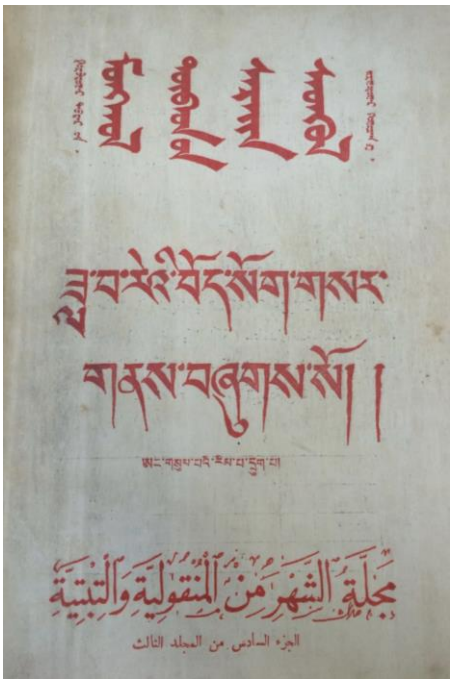


Figure 3. *Meng-Zang yuebao*'s use of Arabic and Islam. Front cover of Volume 3, Number 4 (1935), left, and back cover of Volume 3, Number 6. Source: National Library of China (Beijing).

As concerned as the GMD (and their deputies in the MTAC) were with the goal of Sinicization, they nevertheless continued seeing the Northwest as somehow a "foreign" region, as the journal cover in Figure 3 suggests. Such inconsistencies, revealing the extent of GMD misconceptions of the frontiers, persisted through the 1940s. Such misconceptions operated on the most practical levels. Naturally, the GMD was concerned with being able to communicate with frontier Muslims. Adopting Arabic, as far as they knew, would be an effective means to this end. There were some major ironies, however, in the MTAC's use of Arabic propaganda. The first was that the MTAC Arabic translators, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, did not possess full mastery of the language.[325] This shortcoming is evidenced by their grammatically unsound translation of the journal title "Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Monthly," *Majallat al-shahr min*

[325] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五（2）－1002. The MTAC had one "*huiwen* editor," Zhu Yonghua of Hunan, aged twenty-seven, and three other *huiwen* specialists.

al-munquliyya wa-l-tibatiyya, literally "Journal of the month from the Mongolian and Tibetan." Their translated Arabic propaganda materials contained systematic errors such as this one. Moreover, the MTAC referred to Arabic as *huiwen*, or "the Muslim language"—the same term they used to refer to Uyghur, in which they also published (ultimately slightly more than Arabic).

Second, even more fundamentally, Arabic was in fact not the primary language of frontier Muslims. Arabic was used for ritual purposes, but ordinary frontier Muslims tended not to be fully literate in any language, and in daily interactions they spoke a dialect of Chinese. The GMD finally realized this in the early 1940s, after the government's retreat to Chongqing had sharpened its attention to frontier peoples. In January 1941, the MTAC's publishing arm stated tellingly in a report and funding-renewal request to Chen Lifu's Ministry of Education: "As for our Arabic sections, because the believers in Islam are relatively more familiar with Chinese characters than the Mongols and Tibetans, we have temporarily discontinued [our use of Arabic], though we hope to resume it in the future."[326] In practical terms, the Arabic section had turned out to be superfluous and ineffective, and temporarily suspending it would spare the MTAC some costly printing expenses in a time of tight wartime budgets. Put differently, the Orientalism of the GMD and MTAC, combined with their ignorance of actual conditions on the frontiers (and the assumption that they should approach frontier Muslims more or less as they approached

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[326] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 – 13195. In November of that same year, the head of MTAC publishing Huang Fensheng wrote to Chen Lifu asking for only 1,000 yuan to cover printing costs for the coming year (1942), noting that current funds were insufficient. The MTAC pointed out the high price of paper and the extra cost of printing in three languages, and asked Chen to note the publication's "special importance," reminding him of the Ministry's emphasis on "frontier cultural propaganda" and hope that such propaganda would "contribute to unity and the public good."

Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 – 12434 contains a Ministry of Education budget showing amounts the MTAC spent for printing Mongolian, Tibetan, "Huiwen," and Chinese, a project in which they consulted with the Zhengzhong Bookstore (*Zhengzhong shuju*). In total, they spent 76,500 yuan on their printing equipment, and "600 yuan plus 240 yuan" for their "Huiwen" typeset (which perhaps meant a main Arabic set plus extra for the Uyghur letters that do not appear in Arabic).

Mongols and Tibetans), hindered the achievement of their objectives. Nevertheless, the results tell us a lot about how they viewed those objectives.

In the context of this failure, the Pingliang academy represented an alternative approach in which, amidst even higher stakes than before, a more reliably "authentic" conception of Islam was pressed into the service of GMD frontier policy. Da Pusheng's own writings from the time lend insight into this. His *Six Treatises on Islam* (*Yisilan liushu*), the first four of which were composed during his time at Pingliang, contain some of his views regarding Islamic education in China. Da's goal in this book was to improve knowledge of Islam among both non-Muslim and Muslim Chinese, which, he laments, remained lacking despite Islam's presence in China for over a thousand years. Da's preface, completed at Xi'an in 1945, summarizes his reasons for writing:

> My travels to Egypt, Arabia, and India left a deep impression of the spirit of Islam in those countries. With regard to the *true meaning of our faith* [*wu jiao zhenti*], every interpretation is supported by a considerable body of works that could be used to propagate Islam's ways and teachings [*xuan dao chuan jiao*]. I felt ashamed for having only a superficial knowledge, and did not want to carry out my research carelessly… First and foremost, [my essays] affirm the existence of the one true God, and that Muhammad is His Prophet, to clarify the basic tenets of the religion [*jiaoben*]. Second, they describe belief in the unknown [*al-ghayb*], or Islamic metaphysics, to clarify the fundamental principles of the religion. Third, they discuss knowledge, action, honesty, and faith, to clarify its substantive core. Fourth, they explain the five major rites [*yishi*, i.e. the five pillars], to clarify God's will [*tianming*]. Fifth, they speak of the truth of the religion, to repudiate dissenting views. Finally, they explore the complementary nature of religion and science, to clarify how the teachings of the classics and the sayings of the Prophet are wholly compatible with the modern era. The former three topics comprise a basic understanding of Islam, whereas the latter three constitute a refined understanding of its message. The six treatises as a whole consist of 100,000 statements, each of which has its own unique reasoning, and *for which the Quran and Hadith form the sole basis*. They entertain not the slightest fabrication, and form a solid basis for personal belief.[327]

[327] Da, *Yisilan liushu*, pp. 8-9. Emphasis added.

The format of the *Six Treatises* is unusual: they are partly a work of Islam, partly a work on Islam. Above all, their purpose was not to introduce Islam in a standard way, but rather to present aspects of Islamic modernist and orthodoxizing arguments as the "true meaning of our faith," and to present that set of ideas as compatible with the dominant value-systems of Confucianism and Chinese nationalism.

These priorities are encoded in certain key word choices and turns of phrase. The Islamic content was directed at China's Muslims, and sought to elevate modernist and orthodoxizing arguments above Sufi or "traditionalist" ones. The Islamic modernist impulse appears most clearly in Da's choice to devote an entire section to the "complimentary nature of religion and science" and his assertion that the "classics and the sayings of the Prophet are wholly compatible with the modern era." The orthodoxizing impulse, meanwhile, comes through most clearly in his statement that his book is based on a series of statements "for which Quran and Hadith form the sole basis," which Lauzière argues reflected a dogmatic priority shared by certain "purist Salafis."[328] Significantly, this priority marginalized other traditional genres of Islamic knowledge such as *tafsir* and Sufism, which were now cast as insufficiently reliable.

The Confucian content, meanwhile, was directed at non-Muslim audiences, and was intended to highlight Islam's compatibility with China's dominant moral system. Near and dear to figures such as Chiang Kai-shek, Confucianism was not merely a rhetorical touchstone, but had figured explicitly in national policies such as the New Life Movement. In Da's treatises, the nod to Confucianism appears in such choices as describing Islam as a "Way" (*dao*) or a

[328] Lauzière argues that reliance solely on Quran, Hadith, and the consensus of the Salaf tended to characterize the "purist" Salafi orientation. He states that Taqi al-Din al-Hilali was partial to Hadith as the "exoteric science par excellence") and believed that "all the particulars (*furu'*) of Islam should derive from hadiths [sic] rather than from traditional jurisprudence." Lauzière, *Making of Salafism*, pp. 67, 170.

"Teaching" (*jiao*); its basic tenets not as *usul* but as the "essence of the teaching" (*jiaoben*); the Five Pillars not as *arkan* but as the "five rites" (*yishi*); and God's will not through explicit reference to divinity, but as the "Mandate of Heaven" (*tianming*). Da's conceptual commensuration of Islamic and Confucian concepts shows that the discursive thrust of the Han Kitab generation still had considerable use in the Republican era.

Da Pusheng's Pingliang school was designed to integrate the textualist-orthodoxizing and modernist-rationalist strains of Islamic modernism into state policy toward Muslims. Da's *Six Treatises* also introduced readers to certain Islamic modernist concepts, interspersing Arabic text transliterated and translated into Chinese. The modernist-rationalist strain expressed itself in discussions of Arabic concepts of *'aql* and *'ilm*, as well as in injunctions to bring Chinese Islam in line with the "spirit of modern times" (*xiandai jingshen*, and similar phrases). These priorities were borne out in Da's instructional materials, some of which survive. In contrast to the texts of Chinese Muslim scripture-hall education (*jingtang jiaoyu*), which utilized Chinese to explain and transliterate Arabic but did not assert epistemic equivalence between the two, Da's Islamic modernist curriculum did precisely the opposite (see Figures 4 and 5). In sum, with instructional materials such as Da's, Chinese and Arabic became equivalent media, where the only message to be expressed was the ostensibly universal content of modern life: political, social, economic, scientific, cultural, literary, *religious*, and so on. Ostensibly universal, that is, but also clearly relevant to a certain prescriptive vision of Chinese Muslims' life in China. For many Islamic modernists such as Da, exercising one's rational faculties primarily meant devoting greater attention to "modern" subjects derived ultimately from European curricula, in order to be "caught up with the times."

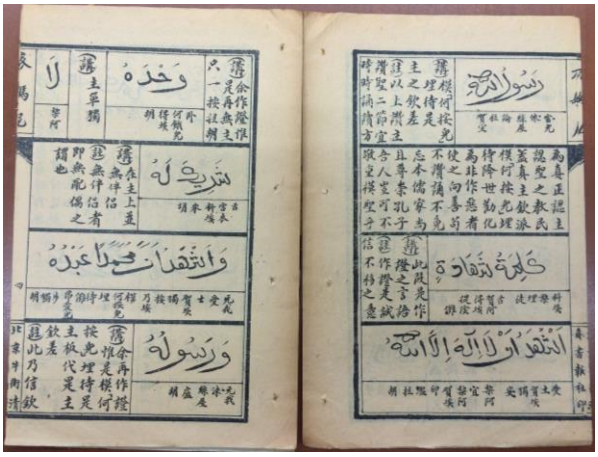

Figure 4. *Yi-ma-ni* (*al-Iman*), 1928. Pages from a late *jingtang jiaoyu* text clearly showing how the Chinese is used to transliterate and explain the Arabic, but not to translate it. These particular pages are explaining the *shahada*, the basic creedal statement that "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is God's Prophet." The Arabic script is in *khatt sini*, or the Chinese Muslim calligraphic style, considered a form of *muhaqqaq*. Source: Rev. Claude L. Pickens, Jr., Collection on Islam and Muslims in China, Harvard-Yenching Library.

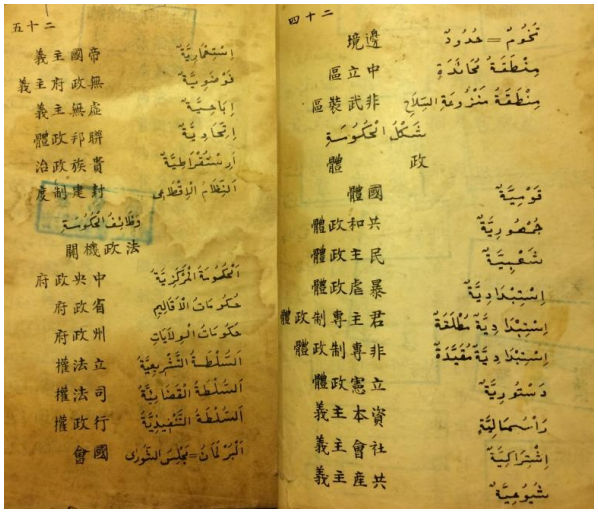

Figure 5. Da Pusheng, *Zhong-A huihua*, pp. 24-25, from an early lesson titled "The Nation-State" (*guojia* / *al-dawla*). The vocabulary list—now side-by-side rather than top-to-bottom—includes terms such as "borders," "nation," "republic," "capitalism," "socialism," "communism," "imperialism," "anarchy," and "central government." The Arabic handwriting is clean but not expert. From the author's collection.

Meanwhile, the most important concept for the orthodoxizing strain was *tawhid*, or "God's unicity." As demonstrated in Chapter One, *tawhid* and other concepts were imported from newly accessible Arabic texts beginning in earnest in the early 1930s. Chinese Muslims

translated *tawhid* as *renzhu*(*xue*).[329] Literally, *renzhu* means "the affirmation of [the one true] Lord," and *renzhuxue* means the study of that set of ideas. Out of context, however, *renzhu* could just as plausibly be translated as "acknowledging the master"; in other words, even *tawhid* had been rendered into Chinese so as to connote acceptance of authority, an idea not present in or relevant to the original Arabic term, which belongs to the same etymological-semantic field as "one," "oneness," "unique," "alone," "unity," and so on (from the root *w-h-d*).

Da explained that his understanding of *tawhid* was informed by the Quran. At the source of Creation, Da said, there is but one true essence, and this essence is God. God's essence, he continued, has "neither face nor features, neither sensory perception nor light; it is simply total undifferentiated oneness."[330] Da corroborated this description by referencing Quran 2:163 ("Your god is one God; there is none worthy of worship save Him"), 18:110 ("Say, 'I am only a man like you, to whom has been revealed that your god is one God'"), and 112:1-4 ("Say, 'He is God, the One, the Everlasting, neither born nor begotten; and to Him there is no equal'").[331]

What, in Da's view, was the specific significance of *tawhid* to frontier Muslim education reform? To this he provides an explicit answer: *tawhid* was not simply another subject to be taught, but the very basis of all proper thought and action:

> Among the essential points of Islamic education, first and foremost is the study and affirmation of God's unicity (*'ilm al-tawhid*). Quran 35:28 states: "Among God's people and creatures…the only servants who truly fear him are those who possess knowledge," because knowing God is the essential purpose of Islam, and the study and affirmation of God's unicity is the source of all other forms of learning, the path to all forms of morality. If people do not know that there is one true God, their hearts will not fear, their bodies will become corrupt, they will wantonly succumb to carnal desires, and all that will remain will be the desire for instant gratification. They will neither respect nor remember God's mercy. Even

[329] See Frankel, *Rectifying God's Name*, on the Han Kitab's equation of *Allah* with *zhu* ("lord, master").

[330] Da Pusheng, *Yisilan liushu*, p. 49.

[331] Ibid., pp. 49-50.

> if their knowledge is broad and deep, ultimately it will be of no use. The impact on their heart will be negligible, their manners will deteriorate and become downcast, they will quarrel and cheat each other pointlessly, and chaos and confusion (*daluan*) will return ceaselessly to the lands under heaven (*tianxia*)![332]

This remarkable passage establishes *tawhid*/*renzhuxue* as the answer to what was understood to be a classically and quintessentially Chinese problem, the maintenance of political and moral-cosmographical order, which Da articulated in the Confucian terms of fearing "chaos under heaven" (*tianxia daluan*).[333] For Da, the most recent and relevant instance of such chaos was the northwestern Muslims' uprisings against the Qing in the late nineteenth century. As the thinking went, if the children of those frontier Muslims, who had quarreled over differing interpretations of Sufi ritual, could instead be made to accept the fundamental truth of *tawhid*, their peaceful acceptance of a Sino-centric order would naturally follow.

Conclusion: Islamic Modernism as an Infrastructure of Chinese Nation-Building

During the Nanjing Decade and the war with Japan, urban coastal Chinese Muslims' importation of Islamic modernist thought from outside China was co-opted in service of GMD state- and nation-building efforts, efforts that sought to integrate and Sinicize predominantly Sufi frontier Muslim populations. Chinese Muslim elites played a crucial role in providing the territorial preconditions, ideological justification, and on-the-ground implementation of the state's frontier development initiatives. In the case of frontier Muslim education reform, Chinese Muslim elites far surpassed the state's own capacity to make inroads among local Muslim populations. In the process, key Islamic modernist concepts, particularly that of God's unicity (*tawhid*), were

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[332] Da Pusheng, *Yisilan liushu*, p. 14.

[333] There is a clear echo hear of Ibn Khaldun's cycle of civilization and barbarism, but if Da was aware of this, he made no mention of it.

asserted to be compatible with (and even a necessary basis for) Confucianism and Chinese nationalism. While scholarship on Islam in China often understands such conceptual reconciliations as inexorable processes of "translation," "syncretism," or "cultural synthesis," I show by contrast how the contingent political and territorial circumstances of the Republican era shaped many of the Chinese Muslim elites' arguments—arguments that have, in the decades since, been naturalized as the canonical truth of Islam's history and identity in China. Overall, this paper shows how Islamic modernist thought and Chinese Muslims themselves—both of which exhibited tremendous border-crossing tendencies—nevertheless became an infrastructure of modern Chinese nation-making.

A final provocation: when the Northwest Development Association published its inaugural plan in mid-1932, the GMD diplomat Wang Zhengting submitted a four-character calligraphic endorsement to be published in the front matter of the plan (several other high-level officials did the same; Wang's appeared first). Wang's endorsement proclaimed the Northwest Development Plan to be a "Great Plan for Governing the Country" (*jing guo da ji*).[334] The character *jing* 經, however, has three meanings. Classically, it does indeed carry the meaning of "ruling," especially a kingdom or country. It also can mean "channels" or "sinews," as in a body, through which vital energies (*qi*) flow: in other words, and infrastructure. In addition, however, it also can mean a "classic text." Chinese Muslim support for GMD frontier nation-building was a *jing guo da ji* in every sense of the word: Chinese Muslim elites made Islamic classic texts and Islamic modernist textualism an infrastructure of Chinese frontier governance.

[334] Zhang, *Kaifa xibei jihua* (1932), front matter.

Wang Zhengting, "*Jing guo da ji*."

PART II

NARRATIVES IN ACTION

CHAPTER THREE: THE DISCURSIVE SINICIZATION OF ISLAMIC MEDICINE

> Chinese Muslim medicine and pharmacology (Ch. *huizu yiyao*; Ar. *'ilm al-tibb wa-l-saydala li-qawmiyyat hui*) is a treasure for humanity. It resulted from the Chinese people's inheritance of ancient Arabian medicine, which has fused harmoniously and to a high degree with the traditional medical culture of our ancestral land. In the long-term development of medical practice, it has undergone continuous synthesis and generated excellent results…throughout history, it has made an important contribution to the perpetuation of our country's various peoples and to the prevention and cure of disease. At present, it continues to play an important role in providing medical care and maintaining health in the Muslim regions of the country and in serving the health of the nation's people as a whole.
> –Ningxia Hui Medical Research Institute Homepage (original in Chinese and Arabic)[335]

> Medicine may be taken up as a science in itself for the sake of science—namely, that science [dealing with] the prevention or cure of disease…Love of knowledge may be the chief motive: that is, it is an intellectual pursuit; though other motives may be associated.
> –Ibn Sina (Avicenna), *Canon of Medicine*[336]

Introduction: The Politics and History of Islamic Medicine in China

Today, Chinese Muslim pharmacies—with their unmistakable green signs and Arabic label *saydaliyya* appearing alongside the Chinese *yaofang* or *yaodian*—ubiquitously line the streets of Linxia, a city in Gansu Province known to Western media as "China's Little Mecca." Similar establishments dot towns across the Northwest. Why are they so numerous? In practical terms, they support and supplement local hospitals, as the above quotation suggests. On another level, as the quotation also suggests, they reflect a consciousness of Islamic medicine's long history. On yet another level, however, these pharmacies exist only with approval from and in dialogue

[335] "Zhongguo ningxia huizu yiyao yanjiusuo gaikuang [About the Ningxia Hui Medical Research Institute]," *Ningxia huizu yiyao yanjiusuo* [Ningxia Hui Medical Research Institute], 4 January 2013, web, accessed 26 September 2016. Available at: http://www.huimri.com/about.html?c=13.

[336] O. Cameron Gruner, *A Treatise on the Canon of Medicine of Avicenna* (London: Luzac & Co., 1930).

with official ideology. Under China's "New Silk Road" policies, such pharmacies (and Linxia as a whole) are meant to convey an authentic Islamic feel, invoking and evoking China's age-old friendship with Muslim countries for high-level visitors. While they have long-standing precursors in the real past, these pharmacies represent a sanctioned form of cultural expression through which Chinese Muslims' identity as the "Hui minority" (*huizu*), one of China's fifty-five minority ethnic nationalities (*shaoshu minzu*), is produced with respect to a national grand narrative. Analogously to Tibetans and other non-Han groups, they show how official ideology considers the Hui to possess a distinctive "Chinese Islamic medicine" (*huiyi*) connected to the Islamic world outside China, yet contained under the umbrella of Chinese medicine (*zhongyi*).

Debates about Chinese Muslim identity intersected in numerous and complex ways with the geopolitical aspirations of the Chinese state. For the past century, Chinese Muslims leaders have stood out for their active participation in the state's discourse of ethnicized tradition, asserting that their medical knowledge and practice originated in Arabia, but subsequently became Chinese.[337] This discursive Sinicization of Islamic medicine constituted an especially creative example of how elite Chinese Muslims contingently yet deliberately pressed their engagement with Islamic modernist thought from abroad into the service of Chinese state- and nation-building: first of the nationalist Guomindang (GMD, or KMT), and later of the CCP.

Amid China's fraught empire-to-nation transition, which pressured non-Han groups to demonstrate loyalty to the new nation-state, medicine became a stage on which the polemics of

[337] In contrast to other non-Han groups who were defined as ethnicities by the PRC in the 1950s, Chinese Muslims developed an argument that their community represented an ethnicity in the 1940s, well before the PRC had even come into existence. On ethnicization generally, see Tom Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). On Chinese Muslim self-ethnicization, see Wlodzimierz Cieciura, "Ethnicity or Religion? Republican-Era Chinese Debates on Islam and Muslims," in Lipman, *Islamic Thought in China*, 107-46. See also Dru C. Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1991).

nationalism and the narration of a modern Chinese Muslim identity played out.[338] During China's Republican era (1911-49), urban coastal Chinese Muslim *ulama* (Islamic scholars), intellectuals, and government officials played the pivotal role in initiating the ethno-nationalist appropriation of the Sino-Islamic past described above, pinpointing medicine as an important feature of Islamic history and culture, yet tying it to a specifically *Chinese* Muslim identity. From the rich history of Sino-Islamic medical exchange, these elite Republican-era Chinese Muslims forged a useful tool in processes of self-identification.[339] Claiming to speak for all China's fragmented Muslim groups, they displayed a tremendous capacity to anticipate how the Chinese state and Chinese society would view them, and productively reflect those discourses back outward, yet still in an "authentic" manner. As a result, they transformed the history of an intrinsically borderless premodern exchange of medical knowledge and materials, one that long predated concepts of nation and ethnicity, into a token of bordered modern identity tied precisely to those concepts.

It was no accident that Chinese Muslim elites singled out medicine to highlight both Islamic authenticity and processes of becoming Chinese. Muslims in China had been active in pharmacy and the materia medica trade for centuries, linking Chinese medicine to the world beyond. For example, Li Xun (855-930), a scholar, merchant, and pharmacist whose ancestors

[338] Frank Dikötter argues that the first two decades of the twentieth century—the years immediately before and after the fall of the Qing—witnessed a new equation of "race" and "nation" in which the Han were seen as the natural leaders of China and the primary engine and object of its historical progress. Frank Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1992), pp. 116-25. On Han-centric politics see also Edward J.M. Rhoads, *Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000). On the racialization of Chinese nationalism generally, see John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996), pp. 103-16.

[339] The usefulness of the terms "identification" and "self-identification" is discussed in Frederick Cooper and Rogers Brubaker, "Identity," in Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), p. 71.

had migrated from Persia to Sichuan during the Tang (618-907), produced a catalogue known as the *Haiyao bencao* (*Miscellany of Maritime Materia Medica*). This work went on to influence canonical Chinese pharmacological studies such as the *Zhenglei bencao* (*Materia Medica Compiled and Classed*, 1082) and *Bencao gangmu* (*Compendium of Materia Medica*, 1598).[340] The Mongol Yuan (1272-1368) witnessed a particularly intense exchange of medical knowledge and materials between the Islamic world and China, as evidenced by the compilation of the *Huihui yaofang* (*Muslim Pharmacopoeia*).[341] Muslim pharmacies remained active in China into the twentieth century, with some family-run enterprises stretching back to the Yuan.[342]

As discussed in Chapter One, Republican-era Muslim pharmacies in Beijing and Shanghai played an important role in financing the elite urban *ulama*'s practices of textual transnationalism, including their travels to Southeast Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East; their collection of classic Arabic texts and modern Muslim print media; and their prolific translation

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[340] Li Xun, *Haiyao bencao jiben* [Compiled Excerpts from the *Miscellany of Maritime Materia Medica*], in *Huizu dianzang quanshu* [*Unabridged Classic Texts of the Chinese Muslim Minority Nationality*], volume 212, edited by Wu Haiying, Wu Jianwei, Lei Xingkui, and Lei Xiaojing (Lanzhou: Gansu wenhua chubanshe, 2008), pp. 1-66; Wu Jianwei and Zhang Jinhai, "Haiyao bencao jiben [Abstract: Compiled Excerpts from the *Miscellany of Maritime Materia Medica*]," in *Huizu dianzang quanshu zongmu tiyao* [*Unabridged Classic Texts of the Chinese Muslim Minority Nationality: Annotated Contents*], edited by Wu Jianwei and Zhang Jinhai (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2010), p. 206.

On these early exchanges, see Angela Schottenhammer, "Yang Liangyao's Mission of 785 to the Caliph of Baghdad: Evidence of an Early Sino-Arabic Power Alliance?" *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 101 (2015): p. 177-241; Angela Schottenhammer, "Transfer of *Xiangyao* from Iran and Arabia to China—A Reinvestigation of Entries in the *Youyang Zazu* (863)," in *Aspects of the Maritime Silk Road: From the Persian Gulf to the East China Sea*, edited by Ralph Kauz (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), pp. 117-49; Anna Akasoy, Charles Burnett, and Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim, *Islam and Tibet: Interactions along the Musk Routes* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), especially Chs. 5 and 6.

[341] Paul D. Buell and Eugene N. Anderson, *A Soup for the Qan: Chinese Dietary Medicine of the Mongol Era as Seen in Hu Sihui's* Yinshan Zhengyao (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 105-25; Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2001), Ch. 16.

[342] Shan Yude, *Huizu yiyao xue jianshi* [*A Brief History of Chinese Muslim Medicine and Pharmacy*] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2005), pp. 116-20. According to Shan, these pharmacies included the multi-city Bai family medical practice dating to the Yuan; the Wansong Pharmacy of Kunming, also dating to the Yuan; the Ding family medical practice of Xi'an, dating to the Qing; the Baosheng Pharmacy of Shaanxi, also dating to the Qing; the Deshen Clinic of Beijing, from the late Qing; the Jiqing Pharmacy of Shenyang, also from the late Qing; and the Bai Huairen Pharmacy of the late Qing and early Republic.

projects, including the first full Chinese translations of the Quran.[343] These pharmacies represented a powerful yet almost entirely overlooked constituency (versus the more familiar northwestern Muslim warlords) supporting elite Chinese Muslims' integrationist politics during the Republican era. Chinese Muslim pharmacists, *ulama*, scholars, and officials had a common interest in politicizing the history of Islamic medicine in China at this time. Homogenizing and Sinicizing pressures from the state, combined with perennial tensions between Muslims and Han, certainly motivated them. But so, more specifically, did the risk that elite Muslims' unique role in Chinese history would be overlooked by a new, state-sanctioned, Han-centric nationalism; by a burgeoning mass media; and by the vast processes of knowledge transformation sweeping across urban China at this time. From the 1910s to the 1950s, new editions of Li Xun's work were being published, as were the first comprehensive Chinese reference works on materia medica such as the 1930 *Zhonghua yaodian* (*Chinese Pharmacopoeia*).[344] Such volumes, however, often did not give due acknowledgment to the Muslim origins of certain materia medica, further incentivizing Chinese Muslim elites to point out those origins—a powerful metaphor for Muslims' belonging in and contributions to China. Not coincidentally, this logic of Muslim "contributions" closely paralleled arguments Islamic modernists elsewhere made regarding the Islamic roots of the European Renaissance and Scientific Revolution: as we will see, the two discourses were interconnected.[345]

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[343] Yang Rongbin, *Minguo shiqi shanghai huizu shangren qunti yanjiu* [*Research on the Republican-Era Shanghai Muslim Merchant Community*] (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2015), pp. 55-75; Stefan Henning, "God's Translator: Qur'an Translation and the Struggle over a Written National Language in 1930s China," *Modern China* 41/6 (2015): pp. 631-55.

[344] Paul U. Unschuld, *Medicine in China: A History of Pharmaceutics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), p. 262.

[345] See for example Peter E. Pormann and Emilie Savage-Smith, *Medieval Islamic Medicine* (Washington, DC: Georgetown UP, 2007), Ch. 6.

This chapter's first section traces the politicization of Islamic medicine in China in the early 1930s. This era saw rising Islamophobia in the Chinese press, including frequent false claims regarding Muslims' reasons for pork abstention. In response, leading Shanghai imams launched a public relations campaign juxtaposing Western biomedical knowledge with Quranic and Hadith injunctions, both of which argued the unhealthfulness of pork. For a time, the Republican era's fluid epistemic environment permitted such pluralistic invocations of authority.

The second section shows that this defense of medical practices was part of Chinese Muslims' larger engagement with Islamic modernism: a transnational process through which they absorbed and developed a set of politically useful arguments about the long history and scientific merits of Islamic medicine, thanks in part to their reading of Arabic-language writings from the Islamic modernist sheikhs of al-Azhar in Cairo. In particular, a new school of thought known as "scientific exegesis" (*al-tafsir al-'ilmi*), articulated especially forcefully by the Azhar sheikh Muhammad Farid Wajdi, provided a basis for Chinese Muslims to generate a broader narrative of the relationship between medicine and Islam.

The third section presents the more politically constrained, and by necessity more sophisticated, politicization of Islamic medicine that occurred immediately before and during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45). It first explores the elaboration of Islamic medicine's relevance to China and Chinese Muslim identity as articulated by the prominent Chinese Muslim scholar Bai Shouyi. Bai's essay on the Song-era (960-1279) Muslim maritime trade in materia medica, published in spring 1937, folded the history of Islamic medicine into a narrative of the Sinicization of China's Muslims and of Islam's contributions to Chinese civilization—crafting a metaphor for Chinese Muslims' belonging in Chinese society in the present. This section ends by considering one way that such narratives of civilizational exchange became actualized: that of

the Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation, dispatched by GMD-affiliated Chinese Muslims during the war to conduct diplomatic outreach to the Muslims of Southeast Asia and, significantly, to solicit medical donations for the Chinese war effort.

The full institutionalization and ethnicization of Chinese Islamic medicine in China did not take place until the PRC. On the other hand, Projit Mukharji warns with regard to Islamic medicine in modern Bengal that "Institutionalization is too often confused with the act of setting up colleges, journals, and professional organizations," and that it may be better defined as "any process or set of processes which abstracts knowledges and practices from their lived social contexts, thereby organizing and framing them in such a way as to make them capable of being reproduced without significant displacements."[346] In the case of Islamic medicine in China, the distinctiveness of the Republican era lies in the deliberate fusing of Islamic medical practice, knowledge, and history to a unique Chinese Muslim identity for the first time. It also lies in the fact that the principal agents in this fusion were Chinese Muslim elites themselves, who chose to "make Islam Chinese" for contingent reasons: the turbulent politics of the Nanjing decade and war years. In the long term, Chinese Muslims' discursive Sinicization of Islamic medicine can be considered a form of conceptual proto-institutionalization, a crucial step in transforming the localized globalism of pre-twentieth-century Islamic medicine in China into the ethnicized *huiyi* of the PRC. In the context of the Republican era, this process was another powerful means by which Chinese Muslims selectively imported, translated, and disseminated the texts, ideas, and temporal logics of Islamic modernism, and channeled them into their integrationist politics.

[346] Projit Mukharji, "Lokman, Chholeman, and Manik Pir: Multiple Frames of Institutionalising Islamic Medicine in Modern Bengal," *Social History of Medicine* (February 2011): p. 4. On the racialization of medical discourses in the Indian context, see also Projit Bihari Mukharji, "The Bengali Pharaoh: Upper-Caste Aryanism, Pan-Egyptianism, and the Contested History of Biometric Nationalism in Twentieth-Century Bengal," *Comaprative Studies in Society and History* 59/2 (2017): pp. 446-76.

Chinese Muslim Responses to "Insulting the Religion": Halal as Biomedicine

Throughout the Republican era, Han-run Chinese newspapers in Beijing, Shanghai, and other cities printed stories offensive to Muslims. These episodes were part of a pattern of Islamophobia and Han-Muslim intercommunal violence, and occurred in the shadow of massive Muslim uprisings and violent state reprisals during the late nineteenth century.[347] The Han press's false claims resulted in widespread protests. After much misunderstanding, the issue was finally settled through coordination between the police, the central government, and Muslim leaders. This set of incidents came to be known as the "cases of insulting the religion" (*wujiao an*).

In a particularly virulent episode in 1932, a Shanghai magazine carried an article titled "Why Muslims Do Not Eat Pork." This article claimed that Muslims are in fact descended from pigs, so of course consuming pork would be the most unfilial act imaginable.[348] Shanghai's Muslim leaders organized protests in response, and some Muslims went so far as to attack the magazine's editor. Eventually the publication was terminated. Similarly, in 1934, the newspaper *Beiping xinbao* published a story denigrating Muslims and the Prophet Muhammad in which it deliberately misprinted the character for "Muslim," *hui* 回, adding the dog radical (犭) in front of it—essentially announcing its opinion that Muslims were subhuman. Related incidents—twenty-

[347] Republican-era intercommunal violence and print-media misunderstandings were discussed in the Muslim press, for example "Henan gushi bei feifen qingzhensi shisi chu [A Story of Fourteen Mosques in Henan Targeted by Arson]," *Yuehua* 2.18 (1931); Tian [pseudonym], "Wuru huijiao wenzi de laiyou [The Reasons for Publishing Characters Insulting to Islam]," *Yuehua* 2.2 (1930); "Beiping jiao'an shimo [The Case of the *Beiping Xinbao* Insulting Islam, from Start to Finish]," *Yuehua* 8.12 (1936), pp. 1-20; See also Gladney, *Muslim Chinese*, pp. 4-5; Rudolf Löwenthal, *The Religious Periodical Press in China* (Peking: The Synodal Commission in China, 1940), Ch. 7. Strikingly similar events occurred in India in the same period. See Julia Stephens, "The Politics of Muslim Rage: Secular Law and Religious Sentiments in Late-Colonial India," *History Workshop Journal* (Spring 2014): pp. 45-64. On late-nineteenth-century violence, see Jonathan N. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China* (Seattle: (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), Ch. 4.

[348] Gladney, *Muslim Chinese*, 4-5; Ma, "Musilin weishenme bu chi zhurou," pp. 1-2; Löwenthal, "The Mohammedan Press in China," pp. 242-46.

four in all, according to one count—persisted for the remainder of the 1930s and 1940s.[349] Finally, in September 1947, *Beiping xinbao* printed yet another article with the intentionally distorted *hui* character. This time, a crowd of local Muslim shopkeepers wrecked the newspaper's offices. According to police reports, a crowd of perhaps three hundred obliterated the office, not even sparing the tea and teacups, and making a particular point of destroying the productive materials, including the ink, paper, type, and presses. The police brought the newspaper's editor and several leading Muslims from the municipal Chinese Islamic Association in for questioning. *Beiping xinbao* submitted damages totaling several thousand yuan, as well as a statement characterizing the Muslim crowd as "surging forward fiercely with great momentum" (*shengshi xiongxiong*) and "proceeding fanatically while refusing to stand down" (*bufu zhizhi kuangxing*). Meanwhile, the Muslim leaders did not deny the actions of the crowd, but rather submitted a list of demands including a formal public apology and the permanent closure of the paper. Remarkably, within the space of a few weeks, the central government had taken the Muslims' side, halted the police investigation, instructed them not to press any charges, and reminded all parties that the Republic of China was a country whose citizens enjoyed "freedom of religion." There is no evidence that counterarguments were entertained.[350]

These "cases of insulting the religion" illustrate the degree of popular misunderstanding toward Muslims in Republican China, as well as the fear and anxiety felt by Muslims about their belonging in the new nation-state. They show how tenuous and vulnerable Chinese Muslims' position was: even something as basic as diet was open to broadsides in the mass media. At the same time, paradoxically, these incidents show how close elite Chinese Muslims were to the

[349] Pillsbury, "China's Muslims in 1989: Forty Years under Communism," pp. 6-7.

[350] Beijing Municipal Archives J181-025-03964, J181-016-00346, J184-002-03931.

GMD state: that is, close enough to smooth things over effectively and receive surprisingly lenient treatment. For the remainder of the years between the early *wujiao* incidents (1932 and 1934) and the outbreak of war with Japan, Chinese Muslim elites began to turn their attention to the larger problem of popular misconceptions: attempting to educate the general public about the basics of Islam. After all, Halal was a major industry for Chinese Muslims, and Chinese Muslim leaders could not allow such a direct attack to go unchallenged, but rather had to show that Halal was in line with official regulations and priorities as well as mainstream values. They appear to have felt especially compelled to explain the reasons for abstaining from pork—which, after all, was probably the most widely consumed protein for the majority of China's population.

In the midst of these events, two leading Shanghai imams took it upon themselves to explain the actual reasons for Muslim pork abstention. Da Pusheng (1876-1965) and Ha Decheng (1888-1943) of Shanghai had helped organize the 1932 protests, but soon devised a more innovative approach to combating misperceptions about Islam among the general populace. Verbalizing what had originated as the spontaneous "moral economy of the Muslim crowd," they presented their arguments in a series of Chinese-language radio broadcasts transmitted daily from June 25 to July 10, 1934.[351] Da and Ha made the motives for this delicate public relations campaign clear enough: the frontispiece of the printed transcript of the broadcasts, made available in August 1934, quoted and translated into Chinese a line of Quranic advice on dealing with non-Muslims: "Invite them to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good stern instruction, and argue with them in the way that is best."[352] Similarly, in the preface, they said

[351] Da Pusheng and Ha Decheng, *Boyin* [*Broadcasts*] (Shanghai: 1934).

[352] *Quran* 16:125.

they wished to "allow non-Muslims a window into the innermost realities of Islam" and "provide Muslims with a means of strengthening their resolve."[353]

Da and Ha's medium is noteworthy: radio had only been introduced in China a decade earlier, and had just begun to gain widespread use in the late 1920s, particularly as a tool in the propaganda war between the GMD and the CCP. Da and Ha no doubt hoped to reach a wider audience than was possible through print. It should be noted that conservative Muslim clerics in other parts of the Islamic world did not always welcome the use of new technologies such as radio. Chinese Muslim leaders such as Da and Ha, however, belonged firmly to the Islamic modernist or Islamic reformist trend, which asserted that Islam is entirely compatible with science, innovation, education women's rights, constitutional democracy, and so on.

In the middle broadcasts (Six through Ten), Da and Ha not only laid out the textual justifications for pork abstention laid out in Quran and Hadith, citing the original Arabic as they went, but also presented several contemporary biomedical theories on the detriments of pork consumption. They hypothesized that in China and elsewhere, human beings began eating pork only out of necessity, despite its manifest uncleanliness, due to the scarcity of other protein sources. Nevertheless, pork was a "vector for transmitting infectious bacteria to humans."[354] They elaborated that some diseases were spread through proximity to swine, others by consuming the meat. They cited the latest European and American biomedical studies and even provided names of relevant diseases in English or Greco-Latin. The diseases mentioned were as follows:

	Broadcast	**Chinese Term (given/not given)**	**Greco-Latin Term (given/not given)**	**Common English Term**

[353] Da and Ha, *Boyin*, p. 2.

[354] Da and Ha, *Boyin*, p. 17.

1	7	*Chili*	Balantidium coli	Bloody stool
2		[not given]	Faciolopsis buski	Trematode
3		*Gouchongbing*	Ancylostoma duodenale [not given]	Hookworm
4	8	*Yuanchong*	Dermatophytosis [not given]	Ringworm
5		[not given]	Paragonimus	Lung flukes
6		*Ganzhangzheng*	Clonorchiasis	Liver flukes
7		[not given]	Gigantor hyschunsgigas [?]	?
8	9	[not given]	Metastrolyngus apri	Lungworm
9		*Zhudandu*	Erysipelas	Red skin
10		*Feilao*	[not given]	Difficulty breathing
11		*Zhudou*	Variola suina	Smallpox
12		*Tiaochong*	Cestoda [not given]	Tapeworm
13	10	*Xuanmaochong*	Trichiniasis	Roundworm

FIGURE 1. Compiled from Da and Ha, *Boyin*, pp. 19-30 passim.

In the several cases where Da and Ha provided Greco-Latin terms, the printed transcript gave these in both Roman letters and in transliteration using Chinese characters. Although actual audio recordings, if made, have not survived, the surrounding sentence structures in the printed transcript unambiguously confirm that they spoke these terms aloud on the radio.

Da and Ha's broadcasts did not invoke biomedical arguments as a morally absolute justification for Halal, but rather made clear their belief that Islam long predated and indeed anticipated the recent developments in biomedicine. In Broadcast Seven, they asserted:

> Medical specialists in all countries have, using scientific methods, conducted research illustrating the detriments to the human body of pork consumption, particularly the transmission of live parasites. When these parasites invade the body, they have an extremely harmful effect. Europeans and Americans now know the harm that pork consumption can cause. What they do not know, however, is that over thirteen hundred years ago, the Quran had already clearly laid out what materials should and should not be consumed, in order to protect people's health. For example, Quran 3:172-173 states: 'O believers! Eat of the sweet stuffs We have provided abundantly for thee, and give thanks to God if indeed you worship Him. It is forbidden, however, for you to consume dead flesh, blood, and the meat of pigs.'[355]

[355] Da and Ha, *Boyin*, p. 22.

The power of Da and Ha's argument rested in the fact that both systems of knowledge, biomedical and textual, had reached the same conclusion: that pork is bad for you.

Of course, Da and Ha were not working with entirely stable, transparent, or universally familiar information. It is worth noting that in the transcript, some of the Greco-Latin terms are misspelled. By contrast, the Arabic quotations from the Quran are spelled correctly. A reasonable explanation is that Da and Ha knew Arabic better than English, let alone Greco-Latin medical terms. On a superficial level, misspellings would not have mattered much in the audio broadcasts, since Da and Ha, again, used Chinese transliterations to approximate their pronunciation. Yet the misspellings are still revealing: in the specific context of Da and Ha's argument, getting the scientific details right was less important than the overall sense of authority conveyed by the fact that Western biomedical science was on their side. As we will see in other examples, Western medical knowledge did not always play this role in Chinese Muslims' arguments. This variability reflects the finding that regimes of scientific and medical knowledge were highly fluid in Republican China, and that the overwhelming influx of new materials and new information created anxieties about verification and authoritativeness. Far from abstract, these problems had direct implications for everyday life: the slightest proofreading error could lead one to ingest a poisonous substance rather than a palliative one. The overall picture was not simply a contingency-defying dichotomy between "modern Western science" and "indigenous Chinese science," but a situation where "particular strategies deployed and the historical conditions shaping that deployment were strikingly local and highly specific."[356] This was

[356] Eugenia Lean, "Proofreading Science: Editing and Experimentation in Manuals by a 1930s Industrialist," in Jing Tsu and Benjamin A. Elman, eds., *Science and Technology in Modern China, 1880s-1940s* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), p. 188.

certainly true of Da and Ha. In citing Western biomedical science that they understood qualitatively but not expertly, and fusing that knowledge with the quite different logic of scripture, the two imams turned conditions of epistemological confusion to their advantage.

There were additional reasons why anchoring their defense of Halal practice partly in Western-style biomedicine was a risky move for Da and Ha. As Ruth Rogaski has noted, even in urban centers such as Tianjin and Shanghai, perhaps three-quarters of the Chinese population still preferred traditional medical practitioners over Western-style ones.[357] Referencing Western medical studies, and especially using English and Greco-Latin terms, walked a fine line between "arguing with them in the way that is best" and plain condescension, an assertion of greater worldliness and educational attainment than their listeners. With all the talk of worms and parasites, it was almost inviting pork eaters to be disgusted at themselves. One of the diseases, *Clonorchis sinensis*, was even named after "China." If the goal was to mend fences with the Han majority, this might not have been the most advisable approach. Moreover, as Xiaoqun Xu has shown, proponents of Western-style medicine versus those of Chinese "native" medicine were engaged in a heated debate through the mid-1930s.[358] For the hypothetical listener who may have been a proponent of Chinese native medicine, Da and Ha's coming down so decisively on the side of Western-style biomedicine may have backfired, creating the impression that Chinese Muslims preferred "foreign" science to "national" science. Native physicians' mobilization of notions of "national essence" and "cultural imperialist invasion" by Western medicine make it all the more surprising that Ha and Da would justify Halal in terms of Western biomedicine.

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[357] Ruth Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China* (Berkeley: University of California Press 2004).

[358] The contest between Western-style versus native physicians is described in detail in Xiaoqun Xu, "'National Essence' vs. 'Science': Chinese Native Physicians' Fight for Legitimacy, 1912-37," *Modern Asian Studies* 31/4 (October 1997), pp. 847-77.

Da and Ha's presenting Halal as sound biomedicine rather than sound Chinese native medicine was likely meant to ally Chinese Muslim leaders with certain Han elites, particularly government officials, who advocated Western science. Again, this was a gamble. As Xu has found, while the allies of Western-style doctors occupied numerous government positions, certain high-level GMD officials instead supported the native physicians.[359] Acutely sensitive to the prevailing winds of Chinese officialdom, Chinese Muslim elites such as Da and Ha probably perceived that espousing a position in line with government officials, some of whom they knew personally, was the best policy for guaranteeing their community's security.

It was not long, however, before cultural nationalism asserted itself. At this point, in mid-1934, the GMD's New Life Movement, with its emphasis on preserving Chinese "essence" and "tradition," was beginning to supplant earlier movements, most notably the May Fourth Movement, that had prioritized more universalist values of newness and progress. The New Life Movement's turn toward cultural nationalism occasioned a shift in the discourse of *weisheng*, which Rogaski argues had come to mean "hygienic modernity" in the Republican era. While some Western-trained Chinese medical professionals remained among the chief proponents of hygienic modernity, more conservative voices had begun to participate in the *weisheng* discourse by the mid-1930s.[360] These developments coincided with the victory of native physicians over Western-style ones in the contest for governmental support, detailed by Xu.[361]

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[359] Xu, "'National Essence' vs. 'Science,'" p. 862.

[360] Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity*, pp. 238, 240. Among these was Qinghua University professor Pan Guangdan, the "father of Chinese eugenics," who claimed in a lecture in Tianjin in 1935 that "eugenics alone was the only effective form of hygiene for the race."

[361] Xu, "'National Essence' vs. 'Science,'" pp. 872-74. Xu dates this victory to the February 1937 adoption of native medical associations' proposals to form a separate Native Medicine Committee inside the Ministry of Health and to integrate native medical schools and experts into the national education system on an equal status with Western-style ones. There is evidence that the discussion of Muslim Halal practice became directly caught up in medicine's shift toward cultural nationalism. In early 1937, the periodical *Family Medicine* (*jiating yiyao*) published an article

At every turn, Chinese official ideology and larger China-centered debates informed Chinese Muslim arguments about medicine and health. An additional context outside China, however, shaped their arguments just as fundamentally. The body of thought known as Islamic modernism had long asserted Islam's compatibility with science, dating back to a famous 1883 debate in which the Muslim intellectual-activist Jamal al-Din al-Afghani challenged the Orientalist Ernest Renan's conclusions regarding the modern Islamic world's allegedly deficient rationality and scientific spirit.[362] Beginning in the 1930s, and continuing past the turn to cultural nationalism in China, Chinese Muslims had the opportunity to engage with such arguments directly from a major source of Islamic modernist thought: Cairo's al-Azhar University.

Egyptian Reinforcements: The Transmission of Arabic "Scientific Exegesis" to China

Before the twentieth century, only a small number of Chinese Muslims were able to travel to Egypt and study at al-Azhar, the renowned center of Islamic learning founded in the Fatimid Dynasty (909-1171). In the 1930s-40s, however, groups of Chinese Muslims had the opportunity to study there thanks to faster travel and communication technologies, as will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five. Increased contact resulted in the transmission of Islamic modernist thought from the Arab world to China, intensifying the perception of Islamic commonalities, but always rendering Arabic Islamic thought relevant to Muslim circumstances in China. One overlooked episode in this relationship is the translation of "scientific exegesis" (*al-tafsir al-'ilmi*), in which Azhar sheikhs presented Islam as compatible with science. This trend began in

about the health benefits of Halal written by a certain Yang Yanhe. See Yang, "Huijiao yinshi yu yixue [Islamic Diet and the Study of Medicine]," *Shiwu liaobing yuekan* 1 (1937), p. 46.

[362] Ernst Renan, "Islamism and science" [1883] in *Poetry of Celtic Races and Other Studies*, 84-108; Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, "Answer of Jamal al-Din to Renan," *Journal des Débats*, 18 May 1883, in Nikki Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism*.

late nineteenth-century Egypt with Muhammad ‘Abduh’s efforts to combine traditional textual scholarship with science popularization; another milestone was the *Tafsir al-Manar* (1901-35), a modernist interpretation of the Quran based on ‘Abduh’s thought and published by ‘Abduh’s disciple, Rashid Rida, in *al-Manar*.[363]

By the 1930s, a new proponent of scientific exegesis had emerged to influence Chinese Muslims’ views of Islam and science. Muhammad Farid Wajdi (1875-1954) was an Azhar sheikh and from 1933 to 1952 editor of its journal *Nur al-Islam* (later *Majallat al-Azhar*, 1930-81). Wajdi’s exegesis, *The Quran Interpreted* (*al-Maṣḥaf al-mufassar*), laid out, much as Da and Ha did, the ways in which Islamic practices not only cohered with but anticipated modern science. This *tafsir,* along with his ten-volume *Encyclopaedia of the Fourteenth/Twentieth Century* (*Dāʾirat maʿārif al-qarn al-rābiʿ ʿashar al-ʿashrīn*), provide abundant evidence of both strains of scientific exegesis identified by Marwa Elshakry: one demonstrating the rationality of Islam, the other using science to appreciate the wonders of Creation.[364]

Wajdi incorporated scientific perspectives into much of his writing for *Nur al-Islam*. In 1938, for example, he wrote a scientific defense of fasting quite similar to Da and Ha’s defense of Halal, entitled “The Scientific Perspective on Fasting” (*al-Sayam fi nazar al-ʻilm*). Ramadan was coming the following month, and Wajdi was offering some pre-holiday reflections for his readers based on a conversation in which a man asked him to explain the rapid rise of Islam in the seventh century. Wajdi writes that at the time, he was only able to answer the man’s question from a “social” perspective, citing the pragmatic effects of the five pillars of the Islamic faith as

[363] Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic*, pp. 180-81; Marwa Elshakry, “Exegesis of Science in 20th-Century Arabic Interpretations,” in *Nature and Scripture in the Abrahamic Religions: 1700-Present: Volume 2*, edited by Jitse M. van der Meer and Scott Mandelbrote (Brill, 2008), pp. 493, 496-501.

[364] “Wadjdi, Muhammad Farid,” *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2.

the reason why Islam spread so quickly. Among these, Wajdi noted, fasting kept the early Muslims focused on a higher purpose than the needs of the body. Wajdi writes that upon further consideration, however, he realized that fasting in particular had not only a spiritual benefit, but a physical one as well, and ensured that the early Muslims were healthy enough to spread their message across vast territories. He goes on to explain the germ theory of disease, the structures of cells and microbes, and the conditions under which they may invade and weaken cells. This digression becomes more or less the main point of the article. After a second digression warning his readers of the detriments of artificial sugar, Wajdi concludes that "fasting, if undertaken correctly as dictated by the Sunnah, can be considered among the most important tasks for human health…an effective means for purifying both body and spirit."[365]

The Chinese Azharite Ma Zhicheng deemed Wajdi's writings on medicine worthy of translation. *Yuehua* (1929-48), the preeminent Chinese Muslim periodical, published Ma's translation of one of Wajdi's articles in 1939. Wajdi's original title was "The Practice of Medicine in Islam" (*al-Tatbib fi-l-Islam*).[366] The title of Ma's translation, "Understanding Islam through Medicine" (*You yixue shuodao huijiao*), implied that this was not simply a recounting of interesting facts, but a metaphor for the overall historical trajectory of Islam.

Wajdi's essay surveyed the major medical traditions of Eurasia, beginning with ancient Egyptian medicine and ending with pre-Islamic Arabic medicine (Ma translates *jāhilī* as *yeman shidai*, "the age of barbarism") and early Islamic medicine. It opens by saying that

> Every people/nation has added a certain amount of superstition (Wajdi: *al-khurafiyya*; Ma: *mixin*) to medical knowledge. Only the Muslim *umma* treated

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[365] Wajdi, "Al-Sayam fi nazar al-'ilm [The Scientific Perspective on Fasting]," *Nur al-Islam* (Shaban 1357), p. 572.

[366] Muhammad Farid Wajdi, "Al-Tatbib fi-l-Islam [The Practice of Medicine in Islam]," *Nur al-Islam* (Ramadan 1356), p. 635.

> medicine as an independent field; this is one of the many distinctions of the *umma*, and among most influential in our opinion, in view of ancient societies' tendency to confuse medicine, spiritualism, and magic. Yes, Muslims past and present have come to adopt other cultures' bad habit of mixing together forms of medical knowledge, but knowledgeable people who understand Islam have not gotten bogged down in this confusion.[367]

Wajdi's essay discusses each medical tradition in detail, asserting that all before Islam were tainted by a reliance on superstitious use of talismans, incantations, and other forms of spiritualist or black magic. Ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian medicine, he says, was largely based on magic and incantations. Indian medicine was the "purview of monks," Hebrew medicine was similarly "determined by religious belief rather than experience," and Persian medicine was "derived from the classic texts of Mazdaism." Greek and Roman medicine also had their fair share of superstition. All incorporated incantations and the notion of evil spirits.

Finally, Wajdi turns to Islam, saying that in the beginning, Islamic medicine alone was free of superstition: "There is nothing in the Quran calling people to use incantations to treat illness; rather, it calls upon people to use medicine."[368] Wajdi follows with a quotation from the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* Hadith collection: "There is no disease that God has created, except that He has also created its treatment." He adds that Hadith encourage people to use medicine, and that there are no Hadith recommending incantations. He ends with a quip: "When the Caliph Abu Bakr became ill, they took him to a doctor, not a sorcerer!"[369] In all of these arguments, Wajdi's assumptions were those of ʻAbduh and Rida, who held that the first obstacle to progress in the Islamic world was not the West per se, but the "superstitious accretions" that prevented Muslims

[367] Wajdi, "Al-Tatbib," p. 635.

[368] Ibid., p. 640; *Sahih al-Bukhari*, 76.1.

[369] Wajdi, "Al-Tatbib," p. 640.

from taking advantage of European-style science, technology, and rationality. They maintained that the way to do this, however, was not to give up religion (as they felt Europeans had done), but to rediscover its initial spirit, which they said was identical to Europe's present spirit of rationality and which had been lost over the generations. It has been argued that 'Abduh and Rida's elevation of the pious forebears (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*) over subsequent generations of Muslims was not a literal call to return to an earlier stage of development but rather a justification for pursuing progress in the present articulated in "religious" terms. Wajdi held that *early* Islam was most compatible with the scientific spirit, more so than either the preceding non-Islamic traditions or the later Islamic ones, both of which suffered from irrational superstitions. Wajdi's contribution was to view this long-standing polemic through the lens of medicine—and Ma Zhicheng's translation imported this logic into the Chinese Muslim context.

Ma Zhicheng's translation of Wajdi's essay on medicine produced a type of translingual conceptual convergence in which key terms were rendered equivalent through a cultural encounter that made such translation possible.[370] In this case, Ma's translation of Wajdi's *khurāfāt* as *mixin* in Chinese linked these two concepts, both now considered equivalent to English "superstition." Islamic modernists like Wajdi understood *khurāfāt* as the unorthodox, supra-doctrinal beliefs and practices rooted in non-Islamic traditions and added to Islam by generations of local Sufi leaders. Islamic modernist thought held that such beliefs needed to be supplanted by a version of Islam that was both more originary and more modern. Meanwhile, many GMD officials and other educated Chinese militated rather similarly against *mixin*, which they characterized as irrational and dangerous. On one level, *mixin* contrasted with *zongjiao*, or

[370] In a different context, Lydia Liu has referred to this phenomenon as the creation of "super-signs." Lydia Liu, *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World-Making*, especially Ch. 2.

"religion," which was increasingly cast as rational, apolitical, and non-subversive.[371] On another level, the Western-trained medical practitioners had also characterized native medicine as reflecting *mixin*, contrasted with modern biomedicine. Here, Ma used Wajdi's argument about the rationality of Islamic medicine (its lack of *khurāfāt*) to prove that Islam in China should be classed alongside other safe, legible, rational forms of *zongjiao*, and not with threatening forms of *mixin*. In sum, a pro-scientific modernism intended to reform Islam in an Egyptian context was translated to defend Islam in a Chinese context: yet another way that Chinese Muslims' transnational connections were made to serve their demonstration of belonging in China.

Toward Narrativization: Bai Shouyi's Study of Materia Medica as a Muslim "Contribution" to China[372]

In the mid- to late 1930s, a variety of factors such as China's worsening territorial situation and the Second Sino-Japanese War raised the stakes of national loyalty even higher for Chinese Muslims. Yet creative as Da Pusheng, Ha Decheng, Ma Zhicheng's responses were, they did not succeed in articulating a comprehensive, politically correct relationship between the transnational character of Islam and the ideological strictures of modern Chinese nationhood. A more totalizing attempt at reconciliation between Muslimness and Chineseness, one that took history more fully into account, was needed. Da and Ha, in their preface to the broadcast transcripts, lamented: "The reason behind the cases of insulting the religion is that most Muslims live in the Northwest, cut off from the Han…we have not recovered the great spirit of the first Muslims who came to China, when the faith was spread peacefully through the sea trade."[373] In

[371] Nedostup, *Superstitious Regimes*.

[372] An earlier version of the material in this section and the next appeared in Chen, "'Just Like Old Friends.'"

[373] Da and Ha, *Boyin*, p. 2.

other words, Da and Ha argued, more intensive integration in China was the only way to avoid misunderstanding, and the more distant past offered a blueprint for how to achieve this.

Coincidentally or not working from that very point—the early history of the Sino-Islamic sea trade, whose significance Da and Ha identified but did not explore—the young Chinese Muslim scholar Bai Shouyi (1909-2000) solved the problem that Da and Ha had not: how to narrativize the historical relationship between Islamic and Chinese medicine: and therefore, metonymically, between Islam and China *as a whole*.[374] Since medical practitioners' verdict had come in against Western-style medicine by the mid-1930s, a change of focus was necessary if leading Chinese Muslims still wanted ("foreign") Islamic medicine to serve their ethic of political and cultural integrationism. As Xu states, "modern doctors conceded that although native medicine was worthless, native drugs were potentially valuable."[375] Bai's work filled the rhetorical gap left by Da and Ha precisely by studying Sino-Islamic materia medica exchange. He published his research in an essay in the journal *Yugong* ("The Chinese Historical Geography Semimonthly," 1934-37), entitled "The Song-Era Muslim Aromatics Trade."[376] The essay argued that the Muslim maritime materia medica trade, which flourished during the Song (960-1279), had contributed significantly to medical knowledge and practice in China. In contrast to Da and Ha's broadcasts, Bai did not assert Muslims' moral or intellectual superiority to Han Chinese, but merely implied that Chinese medicine owed a debt to Islam and Muslims.

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[374] Bai Shouyi is known primarily as a preeminent Chinese Marxist historian and historian of Chinese Islam whose magnum opus was the twelve-volume *Zhongguo tongshi* (Survey of Chinese History, 1989-92). For his biography, see Leïla Chérif-Chebbi, "Bai Shouyi". In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Three*, edited by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, and Everett Rowson. Leiden: Brill, 2015, pp. 41–44.

[375] Xu, "'National Essence' vs. 'Science,'" pp. 856.

[376]Bai Shouyi, "Songshi yisilan jiaotu de xiangliao maoyi" [The Song-Era Muslim aromatics trade]. Special issue on Islam, *Yugong banyuekan* [*Chinese Historical Geography Semi-Monthly*] 7, no. 4 (16 April 1937): 47–77. On Bai's relationship with Gu Jiegang and his embrace of Western academic methodologies, see Chérif-Chebbi (2015), pp. 42-43.

Bai's approach to the history of Sino-Islamic civilizational exchange typified a new spatialized understanding of the Islamic world, one that departed dramatically from the more cosmographical pre-twentieth-century Chinese Muslim concept of *tianfang*—translatable as "heavenly cube" (the *kaʿba*) or "heavenly region" (Arabia), though also as "Islam" itself.[377] Bai's work rested on new disciplines of scientific and social-scientific knowledge that took data and evidence as the source of authority. Beginning in the 1910s and 1920s, developments in archaeology, the May Fourth Movement's historical periodization of literature, and Chinese historians' "massive search for new historical primary sources" furthered this seismic shift.[378] The new history adopted an objectivist, evolutionary approach and exhibited far greater geographical, chronological, and terminological specificity than earlier work, in a type of knowledge transformation that has elsewhere been called a "factualization of tradition."[379] Across urban China, the rise of print media, the institutionalization of Western-style social sciences, and the influx of Western Orientalist writings absorbed, translated, and disseminated by new groups of journalists and academics, made possible a new type of writing about history. For Chinese Muslims, historiographical transformation opened new ways of seeing the Islamic world and new ways of asserting their role in narratives of Sino-Islamic civilizational exchange.

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[377] Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, pp. 8, 83-84; Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "Follow the White Camel: Islam in China to 1800," in *New Cambridge History of Islam, Volume 3: The Eastern Islamic World, Eleventh to Eighteenth Centuries*, edited by David O. Morgan and Anthony Reid (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 421. See also Frankel, *Rectifying God's Name*.

[378] Xiaoqing Diana Lin, *Peking University: Chinese Scholarship and Intellectuals, 1898–1937* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005), especially Chapter 5. See also Doleželová-Velingerová and Král (2001, especially Part II).

[379] Projit Bihari Mukharji, "Vishalyakarani as *Eupatorium ayapana*: Retro-Botanizing, Embedded Traditions, and Multiple Historicities of Plants in Colonial Bengal, 1890–1940," *Journal of Asian Studies* 73/1 (February 2014): pp. 65–87.

While Bai's approach to time, space, and data was informed by Western scholarship, his approach to texts retained aspects of Chinese scholarly traditions. His textual method, following the eighteenth-century *kaozheng* ("evidentiary scholarship") movement, involved ascertaining truth through philological comparisons, in this case of the information on an array of materia medica available in two main sources.[380] The first was the geographical work *Zhufanzhi* (*Records of Foreigners*) by the Southern Song scholar Zhao Rukuo (1170-1231). The second was Friedrich Hirth's and W.W. Rockhill's heavily annotated 1911 English translation of Zhao's original. Hirth and Rockhill gave Bai partial access to the writings of further late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Orientalists, as well as Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, Marco Polo, Ibn al-Bayṭār, Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), Sulaymān al-Tājir and even the Greek physician-scholar Dioscorides—author of the foundational and widely-translated pharmacopoeia *De materia medica*—himself.[381]

Bai catalogued thirty-seven aromatic materials and singled out twelve for discussion: frankincense, ambergris, liquid storax, rosewater, gardenia, costus, myrrh, cloves, sweet benzoin, benzoin, nutmeg and white sandalwood.[382] Many of these were native to Southeast Asia, and all passed through it en route to Chinese ports. It was here that Zhao Rukuo, a maritime customs official in Southern Song-era Quanzhou, catalogued them and the people carrying them.[383]

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[380] On the *kaozheng* movement, see Benjamin Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

[381] Independently, Bai also made use of *Silsilat al-tawārikh*, attributed to Sulayman al-Tājir (ninth century), translated in the Japanese publication *Chigaku zasshi* (Ch. *dixue zazhi*) in 1928, and later in 1941 in the Chinese periodical *Zhongguo wenhua yanjiu huikan*. Bai supplemented Zhao and Hirth and Rockhill with Berthold Laufer's 1919 work on Sino-Islamic trade.

[382] Bai, "Songshi yisilan," pp. 54-66. Bai generally followed the translations given in Friedrich Hirth and William Woodville Rockhill, *Chau Ju-kua, His Work on the Chinese and Arab Trade in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, Entitled Chu-fan-chï* (St. Petersburg: Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1911), pp. 191-239.

[383] Zhao Rukuo, *Zhufanzhi* [*Records of foreigners*] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, [*c.*1125] 1985).

Bai's narrates Southeast Asia as the midpoint between Islamic and Chinese civilizations. For example, Bai quotes Zhao Rukuo's passage on frankincense (*ruxiang*):

> *Ju-hiang* ("milk incense")…comes from the three Ta-shi countries of Ma-lo-pa, Shi-ho, and Nu-fa, from the depths of the remotest mountain valleys. The tree which yields this drug may, on the whole, be compared to the *sung* (pine). Its trunk is notched with a hatchet, upon which the resin flows out, and when hardened, turns into incense, which is gathered and made into lumps. It is transported on elephants to the Ta-shi (on the coast); the Ta-shi load it upon their ships for barter against other goods in San-fo-ts'i; and it is for this reason that the incense is commonly collected at San-fo-ts'i …When the foreign merchants come to that place to trade, the Customs authorities, according to the relative strength of its fragrance, distinguish thirteen classes of incense.[384]

Hirth and Rockhill identify Ma-lo-pa as Mirbat (present-day Oman), Shi-ho as al-Shiḥr (present-day Hadramawt, Yemen), and Nu-fa as Zufar (Dhufar, present-day Oman): the world's top producers of frankincense. San-fo-ts'i, meanwhile, refers to Samboja, or Srivijaya (650-1377).[385]

Bai traces Muslim materia medica through several authoritative Song-era pharmaceutical compilations. On storax, found throughout Southeast Asia, he writes, "It is potent in calming the blood and the *qi* [vital flows]. For treating dizziness, inducing vomiting, and rectifying *qi* imbalances, it has an especially miraculous effect."[386] On cloves, native to the Maluku Islands: "The plant treats spleen depletion and fever in children and adults." On nutmeg, native to the Banda Islands: "Among its uses is clearing and curing pale mucousy diarrhea. There is no other medicine that can cure this. Its effect is like magic."[387] Learning of the "Islamic origins" of such

[384] Bai, "Songshi yisilan," pp. 54-55; English translation from Hirth and Rockhill, *Chau Ju-kua*, p. 195. Lipman notes that frankincense was prized at the Chinese imperial court, and that "Pu Luoxin, a Muslim merchant who brought large quantities of [it] to China, received an official title for his achievement." Lai 1988, p. 76, cited in Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, p. 27.

[385] Hirth and Rockhill, *Chau Ju-kua*, pp. 60-67.

[386] *Su Shen liangfang* [*Su and Shen's Efficacious Prescriptions*] vol. II [n.d.; compiled in Northern Song], in Bai (16 April 1937).

[387] *Hongshi jiyan fang* [*Master Hong's Trusted Prescriptions*] vol. III [n.d.; compiled in Southern Song], in ibid.

commonplace materials, and seeing their usefulness attested in Chinese-language sources, would have left quite an impression on Chinese readers of the 1930s, Muslim and non-Muslim alike.

Bai's factual-philological approach clarified why scholars had failed to understand Islam's multipolarity, for example in his discussion of the etymology of benzoin (*anxixiang*):

> The first volume of *Zhufanzhi* says *anxixiang* is a product of Arabia, whereas the second says it comes from San-fo-t'si. Hirth and Rockhill as well as Laufer translated it as *benzoin* or *benjoin*. This substance was unknown to Europeans before the mid-fifteenth century. But the English *benjoin* is a corruption of the Arabic *luban jawi*; the Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, and French words all more or less resemble the English. *Luban jawi* means "Java incense"; that is to say, Java as known to the Arabs, or present-day Sumatra. Laufer says *anxixiang* was in fact produced in Sumatra, Borneo, and other islands of the Malay Archipelago. In all likelihood, therefore, the Song-era Muslim merchants' products did not come only from Arabia and the surrounding countries; for these merchants always did their best to maximize the paths they traversed and goods they obtained. This, after all, is what merchants do. It is not at all out of the ordinary. In earlier times scholars could not analyze such movements, so of course there are gaps in the records. It is just common sense.[388]

In other words, Southeast Asia formed bridge between China and the Islamic world. Bai's readers, accustomed to thinking of the Islamic world more as an abstract idea than as a geographical entity, could now see that that world was wide indeed.

Bai's scholarship, however, contained a profound irony—one that further politicized the relationship between Islam and medicine in the context of 1930s China. Whereas his evidence pointed to the diversity of the Islamic world and the multiregional character of medical exchange, his argument insisted that this history was significant primarily insofar as it illustrated Chinese Muslims' Arab origins, subsequent Sinicization, and contributions to China. The contents of Bai's essay indicate how these two aspects played off one another:

I:	Muslims and the Pre-Song Aromatics Trade in the South Seas
II:	The Importance of the Song-Era Muslim Aromatics Trade to South Seas Trade
III:	The Song-Era Muslim Aromatics Trade and Its Uses to the Song State

[388] Bai, "Songshi yisilan," pp. 58-59.

IV: The Song-Era Muslim Aromatics Trade and Contemporary Market Prices
V: Medicinal Uses in China of Products from the Song-Era Muslim Aromatics Trade
VI: Several Muslim Aromatics Merchants Active in Song China

Rather than recovering a lost past for its own sake, Bai's essay highlighted the transmission of medical products and knowledge from the Arab world to China via Southeast Asia. This narrative arc conveyed a politically useful message on behalf of Chinese Muslims in the Republican era, constantly obliged (as with Da and Ha) to explain their existence and justify their faith to non-Muslim audiences: they were both authentic Muslims and authentic Chinese, and they had contributed something, as Muslims, to Chinese "civilization" (*wenhua* or *wenming*). To this end, Bai's essay cites Tang Shenwei's *Zhenglei bencao* (1082), the Song-era pharmacopoeia, which catalogued numerous uses for frankincense, storax, costus, myrrh, cloves, benzoin, and nutmeg. Bai states with satisfaction, "Of the twelve aforementioned aromatics known to have been traded by Muslims, these seven had already been incorporated into medical practice in China… and were regarded in Song times as high-quality medicinal products."[389]

Periodization performed an important polemical function in Bai's argument. The question of how to periodize Chinese history incited considerable controversy in Republican China, especially in the Peking University circles to which Bai belonged. As Xiaoqing Diana Lin notes, from its founding in 1917 through the mid-1920s, members of the Peking University history department debated how best to apply the Eurocentric "ancient-medieval-modern" framework to Chinese history. They clung to the notion that Han-led dynasties such as the Song represented the peak of Chinese civilization, but were equally eager to demonstrate that the Han race was continuing to evolve and progress in the present and had not declined despite centuries of Mongol and Manchu rule.[390] In light of these priorities, a Chinese Muslim historian such as Bai

[389] Bai, "Songshi yisilan," p. 70.

faced clear challenges. After all, large numbers of Muslims had entered China during the "foreign" Mongol Yuan (1271-1368), and many of the conventionally cited high points in Chinese Islamic history had taken place at that time or later. Bai's essay navigated these Han-centric politics of the past rather brilliantly, identifying a moment of Sino-Islamic florescence—the Song-era aromatics trade—that not only predated the Mongols but in fact had augmented the glory of a period otherwise known as a Han golden age. Highlighting Muslims' place in Chinese history was especially crucial in analogical, presentist terms: it implied that such a place also existed in the new Chinese nation-state. In the Republican-era context, the legitimacy derived from identifying the Song as (also) a Sino-Islamic golden age is hard to overstate.

A crucial omission further clarifies Bai's preference for the pre-Mongol era and emphasis on the maritime exchange. By the time Bai was writing, the Han Chinese scholar Chen Yuan had discovered in the depths of Beijing Library the *Huihui yaofang* (Muslim Pharmacopoeia)—the early-Ming pharmacological work translated by unknown scholars from Arabic, Persian, and other sources transmitted to China during the Yuan.[391] Chen mentioned this work's existence in his studies of Yuan-era Sinicization from 1924-35.[392] Since the 1980s, scholars have canonized the *Huihui yaofang* as the single most representative work of Chinese Muslim medicine and pharmacy. Yet in the 1930s, Bai, who belonged to the same circles as Chen and even cited him in his essay, assigned no such exalted position to the *Huihui yaofang*. In fact, he did not mention it at all. Why? If Chen had already known about it for ten years, it is highly unlikely that Bai did

[390] Lin, *Peking University*, pp. 91-92.

[391] Chen Gaohua, "Preface," in *Huihui yaofang kaoshi* [*Philological Interpretation of the* Huihui yaofang], vol. 2, edited by Song Xian (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000), pp. 1-2; Li et al. 1995, p. 613; Shan 2005, especially Ch. 3.

[392] Chen, "Preface," pp. 1-2. The original work is Chen Yuan, *Yuan xiyu ren huahua kao* [*A study of the Sinicization of Central Asian Peoples Arriving in China during the Mongol Yuan*] (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1962; original 1924-35).

not himself know about it. Even an inability to read the entries—understandable, given that it lists materia medica by transliterating rather than translating their Arabic and Persian names into Chinese—would explain only the failure to discuss it in depth, not the choice to leave it out entirely. In all likelihood, Bai's omission was more purposeful.

While the *Huihui yaofang* certainly fits the need to illustrate Muslim contributions to Chinese civilization, Bai's motives in writing his essay appear more specific than that. As argued above, Bai wanted to show that that contribution had begun at a very early stage, and had come about in a manner that reached a high bar of both Chinese and Islamic authenticity. Thus, alongside excerpts from dynastic records, Bai quotes Chen Yuan's own writings on the *Haiyao bencao* of Li Xun—a ninth-century Sichuanese scholar-pharmacist of Persian origin. Bai's opening section concludes with the loaded statement that "from the stories of Li Xun and others, we can see that there were already Muslim aromatics merchants living in China proper in the Five Dynasties (907-960), and among these were already some who used Chinese names and could write in Chinese."[393] In other words, Bai probably left out the *Huihui yaofang*, and the Yuan era as a whole, because it disrupted his smooth narrative of "Muslims in China" becoming "Chinese Muslims" at a very early point.[394] Crucially, the Yuan and its texts were "foreign." Because the *Huihui yaofang* is, again, not fully translated into Chinese but is rather a catalog of Arabic and other terms "spelled" with Chinese characters, it prohibitively inconveniences Bai's argument that the inexorable Sinicization of Muslim medical people had already begun in the Tang or Five Dynasties; by contrast, the emerging conventional wisdom of the 1930s placed

[393] Bai, "Songshi yisilan," p. 53.

[394] Scholars today tend to agree with Bai's own periodization of "Muslims in China" becoming "Chinese Muslims" in the early Ming. See for example Benite, "Follow the White Camel," p. 421.

Muslims' Sinicization a full five centuries later, in the early Ming. Like other Chinese Muslim elites, Bai perceived that his community's survival depended on writing a narrative of Muslims' becoming Chinese, in which earlier Sinicization was for political purposes unquestionably better.

At the same time, far from sacrificing one authenticity for another, focusing on the maritime exchange also allowed Bai to affirm Chinese Muslims' authenticity as Muslims. Chen Yuan had debunked Chinese Muslim origin myths, which involved exchanges of emissaries between the Prophet Muhammad and the Tang emperor. Chen argued instead that Chinese Muslims descended from Central Asians arriving in the Yuan, implying that they were less authentic Chinese for being relatively late arrivals, and less authentic Muslims for being non-Arab. Bai's essay resisted Chen's reasoning not only by showing that some Muslims had already become Sinicized long before the Yuan, but also by showing that those Muslims had descended at least partly from Arabs, the original Muslims: in other words, the best of both worlds.

Medical Donations and Chinese Muslim Wartime Diplomacy

Narratives of Sino-Islamic exchange and Muslim contributions to Chinese civilization soon took on new life in the context of China's war with Japan. Between the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in summer 1937 and the Japanese invasion of Southeast Asia in winter 1941-42, the opportunity arose for an unprecedented, sustained encounter between Chinese and Southeast Asian Muslims. This opportunity grew out of China's war strategy and Chinese Muslim elites' relationship with the GMD. In pre-invasion Nanjing and the later wartime capital Chongqing, Chinese Muslim leaders worked closely with the government in pursuing China's war aims. Under Bai Chongxi, a successful general and the highest-ranking Muslim in the GMD, Chinese Muslim elites retreating westward with the GMD formed an official organ known as the Chinese

Islamic National Salvation Federation (*Zhongguo huijiao jiuguo xiehui*).[395] Enjoying direct involvement from Chiang Kai-shek, this organization launched several initiatives in support of China's war effort. One of these was the Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation (*Zhongguo huijiao nanyang fangwentuan*, 1939-1941). Conscious of the need to compete with Japan for Muslim hearts and minds across Asia, the GMD relied on such Muslim delegations to fill a crucial vacuum in wartime foreign policy.[396]

Led by Chinese Muslim polyglot Ma Tianying (1900-82), the delegation highlighted the mutually beneficial long-term interaction between Chinese and Islamic civilizations. The main tool at the delegation's disposal was the narrative of movement and exchange, articulated by Bai Shouyi and others, that linked China with the Islamic world. This narrative allowed the delegation to build rhetorical bridges to their Southeast Asian counterparts. As importantly, it reflected desires to revive past "golden ages" and promote Islamic unity, desires shared by Islamic modernists across the world at this time.

While abroad, Ma Tianying authored a Chinese-language tract to present to overseas Chinese, including a section on Islam's role in world history that specially mentioned medieval Andalus's "sages of philosophy and medicine" (*zhexue yi sheng*).[397] It was probably not accidental that Ma mentioned the history of medicine in Islam. One of the Delegation's accomplishments was organizing collections of medical supplies from overseas Chinese and Muslim communities in Malaya, to aid war relief in China. This endeavor takes on added

[395] Françoise Aubin, "Islam on the Wings of Nationalism: The Case of Muslim Intellectuals in Republican China," in *Intellectuals in the Modern Islamic World: Transmission, Transformation, and Communication*, edited by Stéphane A. Dudoignon, Komatsu Hisao, and Kosugi Yasushi (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 246-55.

[396] Mao, "Muslim Vision," p. 380; Selçuk Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim," pp. 1161-62.

[397] Ma Tianying, *Huijiao qianshuo* [*A brief introduction to Islam*] (n.p., 1940), pp. 33, 35.

significance in light of Bai Shouyi's research on materia medica: perhaps leading Chinese Muslims saw the wartime medical donations as a tangible way of reviving an aspect of the Sino-Islamic past. The Delegation formed a Medical Collection Committee to oversee the process, as well as Muslim "China relief funds." Such efforts were seen as a way to "utilize the strength of international Islam" and "counter the enemy."[398] Ma added that, while in Singapore, the delegation collected more than 11,000 yuan from the tea merchant and Sino-Malayan Cultural Association member Lin Qingnian and other overseas Chinese, and 5,000 yuan from Huang Shufen and others in Johor. The Malay Muslim China Relief Fund and the Sino-Singaporean Preparedness and Relief Fund also donated.[399] One estimate puts the total value of donations at 800,000 yuan.[400] These donations testify to Chinese and Muslim Malayans' desire to assist China's war effort and, perhaps, to the resonance of the Delegation's civilizational narrative.

Conclusion: From Han Islamophobia to Muslim Sinophilia

In China's Republican era, Chinese Muslim elites undertook a discursive Sinicization of Islamic medicine in response to contingent political pressures. At first, Chinese Muslim elites countered Islamophobic attacks in the media by synthesizing multiple types of authority, textual and biomedical. This pluralistic approach became untenable, however, when cultural nationalism and territorial crisis compelled Chinese Muslim elites to state their loyalty to the Chinese nation more unambiguously. In this context, the translation of Islamic modernist "scientific exegesis" offered

[398] Bai Chongxi and the Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation, *Zhongguo huijiao nanyang fangwentuan riji* [] (Chongqing: Zhongguo huijiao jiuguo xiehui, 1942), pp. iii, vii.

[399] Ibid., p. iii.

[400] "Ma Tianying shanyong waijiao 'fangwentuan' qianwang Nanyang" [Ma Tianying's use of "goodwill delegation" diplomacy in the South Seas]. *Gongchandangren* [*The Communist*], no. 22 (2006): p. 53. Some years later, Ma stated in private papers that the amount was in fact 800,000 U.S. dollars. It is difficult to confirm which, but the amount was very high.

new tools for asserting the rationality of Islamic medicine. It was Bai Shouyi, however, who fully politicized and narrativized the history of Islamic medicine in China, transforming the rich past of Sino-Islamic exchange into a metaphor for Chinese Muslims' belonging in and contributions to China, while rhetorically safeguarding their communal distinctiveness. Bai's theme of "contribution" found ready application in wartime Muslim diplomatic missions, which made Islamic medicine literally a component of "saving the nation." This recurring theme of civilizational contribution has proven just as effective in the PRC era. Its institutionalization continued in the late 1940s, and resumed again after the Cultural Revolution, in the concept of "Chinese Islamic medicine" (*huiyi*), in the many Chinese Muslim hospitals and pharmacies across the country, and in the official rhetoric of the "New Silk Road."

CHAPTER FOUR: UNIVERSALISM CO-OPTED

> Dexin told us he departed from the capital on the twenty-second day of the tenth month of the year 1257 according to the Islamic calendar, or the twenty-first reign year of the Daoguang Emperor [i.e. December 1841]. On the sixteenth day of the eleventh month, he crossed beyond the frontiers of China…
>
> Eventually reaching Arabia, he lived several days on the coast of Yemen, traveling all the while by boat…On the eighth day, he reached Jidda. By the Islamic calendar, this was the seventeenth day of the fourth month of the following year. Here he stayed again by the coast, and took the opportunity to visit the tomb of Eve. Then, finally, he would go to Mecca. He rode by camel for two nights, for a third by horse. He set out from Jidda on the evening of the twenty-eighth day of the fourth month, and reached Mecca at first light on the first day of the fifth.
>
> Mecca: at last he had arrived…He visited the city itself as well as the tomb of the Prophet [in Medina], and for the first time glimpsed the *ka'ba*. He lived for a time in sight of the *ka'ba*, which is surrounded by a palatial mosque.
> -Ma Rulong, *Chaojin tuji* [*Record of a Pilgrimage*], 1864[401]

> Arise, arise! Muslims of China! Let us lift up our Quran!
> Follow the path of our Prophet! Hoist the standard of righteousness,
> defend our traditional values, and see the enemy—Japan—for who he is.
> He dons a false face; he deceives our brethren the world over.
> Defeat him we must; we will bear his treachery no more!
> Forward, Muslims, forward march!
> Arise, arise! Muslims of China! Let us raise our fine swords, loose our battle cry,
> United in patriotic conviction, fulfilling destiny, defending the nation,
> And recognizing our enemy: Japan.
> Mercilessly he sprays his artillery, in cold blood butchers; thinks he can swallow us whole.
> We reject his invasion.
> Forward, Muslims, forward march!
> -"Chinese Muslim War of Resistance Song," march in F minor, 1939[402]

Introduction: Beyond China?

[401] Ma Dexin a.k.a. Ma Fuchu, *Chaojin tuji* [Record of the Hajj Journey of Ma Dexin], translated by Ma Anli (n.p., 1864), pp. 1, 4. The words Yemen, Jidda, *Hawa* [Eve], Mecca, and ka'ba appear in Arabic script amidst the Chinese.

[402] Lyrics by Wang Mengyang, music by Ma Zibai. Printed on multiple occasions in *Zhongguo huijiao jiuguo xiehui yuekan* [Chinese Islamic National Salvation Association Monthly] (Wuhan, Chongqing, Nanjing: 1938-48). The author of the lyrics, Wang Mengyang, was a regular contributor to *Yuehua*.

Ma Dexin, a tea merchant and Islamic scholar from Dali, Yunnan, was the first Chinese Musflim in modern times to leave an extant travelogue regarding his Hajj to Mecca, made in the 1840s. As the above passage from his travelogue suggests, moving "beyond the frontiers of China" was a significant event in the journey. What could moving physically beyond China mean for Chinese Muslims in modern times?

The answer to that question changed dramatically in the next hundred years. A century after Ma's journey, in summer 1939, the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation, which had retreated with the GMD government to Chongqing in the face of the Japanese push into the interior of 1937-38, sponsored the Chinese Azharites to make their own Hajj journey, the overt purpose of which was to intercept a Japanese-sponsored Hajj delegation and carry out anti-Japanese propaganda among the world's Muslims gathered in the Hijaz.[403] In the intervening decades, the Hajj for Chinese Muslims had gone from being nearly impossible to being instrumentalized in the wartime policy of the GMD and its elite Chinese Muslim allies.

The war with Japan represented a point of no return on China's Muslims. Once again, the size of China's Muslim population was believed (or at least asserted) at the time to be fifty million, or one tenth to one eighth of the total population. Especially given the fact that so many Muslims had suddenly found themselves living under Japanese rule in Manchuria, the elite Chinese Muslims who were still in GMD-controlled territory were obliged to demonstrate absolutely unequivocally that they could be of service to the nation in its moment of greatest need. In the words of Yufeng Mao, "The perceived size of the population, coupled with the concentration of Muslims in the much-contested northwestern provinces of Xinjiang, Gansu, and

[403] This mission is detailed in Yufeng Mao, "A Muslim Vision for the Chinese Nation: Chinese Pilgrimage Missions to Mecca during World War II," *Journal of Asian Studies* 70/2 (May 2011): pp. 373-95.

Shaanxi, as well as in Manchuria in the northeast, made the loyalty and support of the group's elites especially important to various political forces, particularly Japan and the Nationalist regime."[404] In addition, Rana Mitter's discoveries about the extent of the GMD police state's activities during the war further encourage the conclusion that Chinese Muslims remaining in GMD-controlled territory, and closely connected to the government no less, had little choice but to demonstrate their support for the war effort in every possible way. As if the war itself were not dangerous enough, leaving doubt as to one's loyalties could be equally perilous. At the very least, taking part in the war allowed Muslims to recast some negative perennial stereotypes in a more positive light, as in the "Chinese Muslim War of Resistance Song" above. Muslims were for the time being no longer cast as a "fierce and brutal people," but rather as possessing admirable martial qualities and "traditional values."[405] While the GMD government tended to treat Muslims as crucial allies throughout the war, however, is unclear what level of recognition Chinese Muslims may have received from Chinese society at large in the wake of their efforts.

The most important of these demonstrations was the Chinese Muslim wartime diplomatic delegations: the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation (*Zhongguo huijiao jindong fangwentuan*, 1937-39), Chinese Islamic Hajj Delegation (*Zhongguo huijiao chaojin tuan*, summer 1939), and Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation (*Zhongguo huijiao nanyang fangwentuan*, 1939-41).

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[404] Mao, "Muslim Vision," p. 380.

[405] Jonathan N. Lipman, "A Fierce and Brutal People: On Islam and Muslims in Qing Law," in *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China*, edited by Pamela Kyla Crossley, Helen F. Sui, and Donald S. Sutton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); As Yufeng Mao has observed, this inversion of Islamophobic stereotypes dated back at least as far as the Chinese Muslim student delegations to Japan in the first decade of the twentieth century: In 1906, a group of Sino-Muslim students in Japan first pointed out that, because of their martial tradition, discipline, and solidarity, they possessed the qualities necessary to save China (Wang [1908] 1988). Here the students used "martial tradition," "discipline," and "solidarity" in place of earlier terms such as "fierce and brutal." Thus, China's weak position in international politics allowed Muslims to turn this stereotypical view on its head. Mao, "Muslim Vision," p. 377.

Each of these delegations was led by worldly, multilingual, articulate, and trusted Chinese Muslims connected to or directly serving in the GMD government. The Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation (*Zhongguo huijiao jiuguo xiehui*), established in autumn 1938 in Wuhan, assumed responsibility for coordinating the delegations from then on.

These missions would not have been possible, however, unless the Hajj and travel to the Middle East had already been rendered physically easier yet conceptually circumscribed. Before turning to the wartime delegations, therefore, this chapter first traces the larger transformation of the Chinese Muslim Hajj from early modern to modern times, focusing in particular on an under-studied episode—the Hajj journey of Imam Ma Songting and *Yuehua* editor Zhao Zhenwu in 1932-33—that epitomized both Chinese Muslims' burgeoning transnational connections and their increasing involvement in state- and nation-building back home. In other words, the Hajj and wartime delegations were yet another area in which Chinese Muslims' increasing contact with Muslims outside China went hand-in-hand with increasing initiatives by the Chinese state and Chinese Muslim elites to channel such transnational Islamic connections to suit the purposes of nationalism, integrationism, and in this case, national security.

This chapter, however, moves beyond presenting the wartime delegations in terms of a real or even a perceived "contribution" to China's wartime effort. Instead, it places greater emphasis on two alternative modes of interpretation that more fully historicize this notion of "contribution," and to an extent challenge its status as an all-encompassing analytical framework. The first mode highlights the tremendous geographical, geopolitical, and sociocultural scope of the delegations' activities. Many of their interactions with and representations of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and Southeast Asian Muslims (and non-Muslims), both planned and spontaneous, cannot be explained by Chinese or elite Chinese Muslim interests alone, and must therefore be

contextualized with respect to ontological and epistemological formations other than "China." The delegations elicited a wide range of thoughts, reactions, and sentiments from some of the era's most important Muslim political and intellectual leaders, not all of which related to the war or to China. In addition, the delegation members themselves served as unlikely first-hand witnesses to several events of world-historical significance other than the Second Sino-Japanese War, including the Palestinian Revolt of 1936-39, the late-1930s upsurge of the Pakistan movement, the death of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, and the mass exodus of Jews from Europe. The second mode, which restores "China" to the equation, concerns the delegations' intrinsically performative quality: despite pointing in multiple directions, the very same abovementioned interactions and representations nevertheless compelled the delegation members to articulate their political positions on China, Islam in China, and the Islamic world in new ways.[406] Ultimately, the delegations were far less significant for their tangible impact on China or the war,

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[406] Kelly Hammond similarly describes the Japanese-sponsored Hajj delegation of 1939 (see below) as "performative," defined as "meaning that the specific time and place when [the Japanese delegation leader] Tang Yichen's hajj occurred had an effect on…'social and cultural transformations' going on around him and were reflected in his recording and editorializing of his journey." Kelly Anne Hammond, "The Conundrum of Collaboration," p. 202. On performativity, Hammond further cites Derrida's *Of Grammatology* (1967) as well as Simon Coleman and John Eade, "Introduction to Reframing Pilgrimage," in *Reframing Pilgrimage: Cultures in Motion*, edited by Simon Coleman and John Eade (New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 17.

In the case of the GMD-sponsored delegations discussed below, I would characterize performativity somewhat more literally as *acting*, and representing oneself as having acted, in accordance with the expectations of a given audience or authority—in this case, the GMD government and the Chinese Muslim elites of the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation. I concur, however, with the applicability of this concept to this history and in particular wish to highlight the parallelism of the GMD- and Japanese-sponsored delegations.

My understanding more generally of the nature of the GMD-affiliated delegations also echoes Hammond's conclusions regarding the Japanese-sponsored one. As she states: "Tang's journal offers a glimpse into the tensions and stresses of traveling on the brink of war in Europe and a window into the everyday experiences of being a Chinese hajji during the war. It also underscores the fraternity among Muslims from China that often overrode any sort of Nationalist or Japanese sponsorship. Maybe the question of trying to decipher their "true" loyalties obscures the main point: Tang and his companions participated in an on-going dialogue between the Nationalists and the Japanese Empire about the loyalties and place of Sino-Muslims on the Mainland during the war. The hajjis and the Japanese Empire respectively got what they wanted out of the trip: the North China Muslims got a free hajj and the Japanese established diplomatic relations with the Saudis, leading to Japanese-Saudi negotiations for an oil concession in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia almost immediately after Tang and his companions returned to China." Hammond, "Conundrum of Collaboration," pp. 197-98.

and far more significant as a bold and unequivocal assertion of GMD-affiliated Muslims' exclusive right to speak for all China's Muslims, as well as of Chinese Muslims' loyalty, their reliability, and above all, their Chineseness.

Modern Chinese Muslims and the Hajj: From Cosmography to Geography

In China, the essence of Islam has long been associated with Mecca. This is attested by Chinese Muslims' centuries-old use of the term *tianfang*—literally "heavenly cube" (i.e. the *kaʿba*) or "heavenly region" (i.e. Arabia)—as one of the most enduring metonyms for both the region and the religion. Despite this strong if vague discursive significance, Mecca as a living place with social and political realities remained distant for most of Chinese Islamic history. The same could be said of large portions of the Islamic world. Indeed, only a handful of intrepid Chinese Muslims actually made the Hajj in the five centuries of isolation between the fateful introversion of the Ming and the advent of modern steam travel. Thanks to steamships, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw a dramatic increase in the number of pilgrims performing the Hajj.[407] Particularly for Muslims living in the "peripheral" regions of Islam, steam technology allowed the Hajj to enter the realm of practical possibility for a much greater number of believers than before. What had been an ordeal of several years in premodern times now became a journey of weeks or months. As a result, whereas before the far-flung Muslim communities in eastern China or the eastern Malay Archipelago may have sent only one or two Hajjis to Mecca per generation, now they could send several per year. Eric Tagliacozzo calculates that by the early twentieth century, "fully half of all pilgrims…in any particular year might be coming from very

[407] Gelvin and Green, *Global Muslims*; Eric Tagliacozzo and Shawkat M. Toorawa, eds., *The Hajj: Pilgrimage in Islam* (Cambridge UP, 2016).

distant places, and almost certainly by sea in these cases."[408] For Chinese Muslims especially, reaching Mecca by sea was cheaper, faster, and safer than following traditional land routes. Although Chinese Muslims were slightly less well-positioned than their Southeast Asian counterparts to capitalize on the new opportunities afforded by steam travel, the consequences of Hajj specifically and of journeys to the Middle East generally had undeniably multiplied by the third decade of the twentieth century.[409]

During the war with Japan, however, pilgrimage largely became enveloped within the motivation to demonstrate Chinese Muslims' loyalty, and utility, to the Chinese nation. Just slightly before that point, other Chinese Muslim travels to the Middle East helped set the stage for that transformation. A highly consequential but under-studied episode in the history of modern Chinese Islam that speaks to these questions is the Hajj and travels of 'Abdul Rahim Ma

[408] Tagliacozzo and Toorawa, *The Hajj*, p. 113.

[409] Scholarship on the significance of Hajj for Chinese Islam remains limited. This is undoubtedly largely because the number of pilgrims was itself so limited before the twentieth century, meaning that the topic merited attention only in a very small number of special cases—for example, in Zheng He's voyages in the early Ming or Ma Laichi's studies in Mecca in the mid-Qing. Notably, Marshall Broomhall, member of the China Inland Mission and the first English-speaking observer to write a book-length study of Chinese Islam, did not devote much discussion to the topic. Nearly a century later, Jonathan Lipman finally provided a basis for understanding what the Hajj meant to certain famous Chinese Muslims over the centuries, such as Ma Laichi in the eighteenth, and Ma Dexin and Ma Wanfu in the nineteenth. More recently, Kristian Petersen has drawn a useful contrast between the largely theoretical, "cosmographical" notions of Hajj maintained by Han Kitab authors Wang Daiyu (1590-1658) and Liu Zhi (1670-1724?), and the "embodied" journey through time and space promoted and practiced by Ma Dexin (a.k.a. Ma Fuchu, 1794-1874). Here we must note, however, that despite his living in the age of "steam and print," Ma Dexin's Hajj was still a relatively rare event, and did not, so far as we can tell, lead on its own to a broad-based recovery of contact between Chinese and Arab Muslims. Meanwhile, Yufeng Mao has shown how the Hajj became partly a tool of pro-Chinese and pro-Japanese propaganda to the Islamic world during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45). Marshall Broomhall, *Islam in China: A Neglected Problem* (China Inland Mission, 1910); Edward L. Dreyer, *Zheng He: China and the Oceans in the Early Ming, 1405-1433* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2007), 156-59; Jonathan N. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China* (University of Washington Press, 1997); Kristian Petersen, "The Multiple Meanings of Pilgrimage in Sino-Islamic Thought," in Jonathan Lipman, ed., *Islamic Thought in China: Sino-Muslim Intellectual Evolution from the 17th to the 21st Century* (Edinburgh UP, 2016), 101-02; see also Kristian Petersen, *Interpreting Islam in China: Pilgrimage, Scripture, and Language in the Han Kitab* (New York: Oxford UP, 2017), especially Ch. 3; Zvi Ben-Dor Benite notes that Ma in fact spent eight years in Egypt, but that "this episode was too brief and limited in scope and distribution, as most of the texts never left the province of Yunnan." Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "Taking 'Abduh to China," in *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*, edited by James L. Gelvin and Nile Green (University of California Press, 2014), p. 251; Yufeng Mao, "A Muslim Vision for the Chinese Nation: Chinese Pilgrimage Missions to Mecca during World War II," *Journal of Asian Studies* 70 (2011): 373-395.

Songting (a.k.a. Ma Shouling, 1895-1992) and ʻAbdullah al-Siddiq Zhao Zhenwu (a.k.a. Zhao Bin, 1895-1938), undertaken from November 1932 to May 1933. This journey was discussed in Chapter One in terms of its consequences for Chinese Muslim textual transnationalism. Here, the question of what actually happened during the journey is of greater significance.

The social stature of the two leading figures speaks to the importance of their Hajj journey. We have already met Zhao Zhenwu in Chapter One. Ma Songting of Beijing's Niujie Muslim community was well-versed in the Arabic-language classics, helped found the Chengda Academy, and came to be considered one of modern China's "Four Great Imams."[410] While Ma Songting was the senior figure in terms of religious scholarship, Zhao appears to have been the principle organizer of meetings and activities.

Beyond making the Hajj, the objectives of Ma and Zhao's journey were to deliver a new group of Chinese Muslim students to al-Azhar and to build contacts throughout the region that could inform the new Arabo-centric and Islamic modernist orientation of the urban coastal Chinese Muslims, discussed in Chapter One.[411] In terms of these objectives, the journey was a tremendous success. Ma and Zhao made face-to-face contact with individuals they had previously known only through print media or at most written correspondence. These included many of the leading figures of the day: Muhammad Ahmadi al-Zawahiri, and the other sheikhs of al-Azhar; Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib, editor-in-chief of *al-Fath*; King Fu'ad I of Egypt; Hajj Amin al-Husseini, grand mufti of Jerusalem; King ʻAbdul ʻAziz ibn Saud, ruler of the newly unified country of Saudi Arabia; and others. The meetings in Egypt in particular resulted not

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[410] *Zhongguo huizu mingren cidian*, pp. 186-87.

[411] Zhao's travelogue, *Xixing riji* [*Diary of a Journey West*], originally published in *Yuehua*, is the main source of information surviving about their journey.

only in an increased commitment from al-Azhar and the Egyptian crown to the Chinese Azharites, but also in the dispatching of the two Egyptian instructors to China mentioned in Chapter One.[412] Finally, as also mentioned in Chapter One, before leaving Cairo, Zhao purchased a set of Arabic type from the publishing house Matba'at Sharikat al-Tamaddun al-Sina'iyya, which upon his return to China would allow Chinese Muslims to print in Arabic for the first time in history. In short, Ma and Zhao's Chinese Hajj journey embodied the ethos of transnationalist integrationism in a new way, containing both genuine aspirations to Islamic unity and indications of the narrower interests of elite Chinese Muslims in China at the same time.

Having made their travel arrangements through the American Express Company in Shanghai, Ma and Zhao boarded the steamer *Conte Rosso* on 9 December 1932, accompanied by the five new Chinese Muslim students bound for al-Azhar.[413] Understanding the momentousness of such an endeavor, Zhao wrote at this time that "Before, those without money could not make the Hajj, but those with money were too afraid to do so."[414]

Ma and Zhao first experienced a moment of difficulty in Singapore. Attempting to pay a visit to Syed Ibrahim bin Omar Alsagoff, a leader of Singapore's Hadrami Arab community, they were forced to wait a long time before being received abruptly and with confusion as to their purpose. Zhao states that he and Ma had hoped simply to pay their respects and to ask for assistance making contacts in Hijaz. Zhao notes, however, that Alsagoff did not rise from his

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[412] *Yuehua* 5.25, pp. 4-9.

[413] Zhao, *Xixing riji*, 7, 9. The five students were Han Hongkui, Wang Shiming, Jin Diangui, Ma Jinpeng, and Zhang Bingfeng. According to Pang Shiqian's data on the Chinese Azharites, Jin and Han would in fact pass away in Egypt in 1941 and 1945, respectively. Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, 19-22. Meanwhile, Wang Shiming would join the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation of 1937-39 and would later become the Republic of China's first consular official in Jeddah.

[414] Zhao, *Xixing riji*, p. 14.

desk to greet them, and that when they attempted to explain themselves in broken Turkish to Alsagoff's Turkish-speaking assistant, they were told that he was very busy. Their frustration with the barriers of language, culture, and status are apparent.[415]

Later that same day (15 December 1932), Ma and Zhao enjoyed a much better reception with Abdul Wahid Aljelany, editor-in-chief of the Arabic-language weekly *al-Huda*. Published on Singapore's Haji Lane, a center of the local Arab community, *al-Huda* was incidentally the foreign publication received in greatest quantity by *Yuehua* following Zhao's epistolary outreach efforts of 1930-31. As with Alsagoff, there were some communication issues with Aljelany—Zhao was apparently nervous and could not adequately express himself in Arabic or English, instead handing Aljelany a pre-printed written explanation of their purpose. Nevertheless, the exchange bore immediate fruit as Aljelany visited at length with Ma and Zhao and even offered to put them in touch with his father in Port Said, in order to assist them with their Hajj. Aljelany provided them a letter of introduction and wrote directly to his father advising him of the Chinese Muslims' impending arrival in Egypt.[416] In addition, as Ma and Zhao would later learn, Aljelany cabled the Egyptian paper *al-Balagh* to notify Muslims there about Ma and Zhao's itinerary, mentioning them by name.[417]

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[415] Zhao, *Xixing riji*, p. 19. Ironically, during the Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation of 1939-41, Syed Ibrahim and other members of the Alsagoff family (and the Hadrami elite generally) warmly received the delegation in Singapore. Moreover, by that point, there is evidence that Syed Ibrahim had progressed in his understanding of the relationship between Chinese Islam and Islamic history generally; on at least one occasion, he referenced China as an example of the peaceful spread of Islam: "Those who do not study the true history of the Islamic conquest believe that Islam was spread by force, but a glance at India, the Malayan Archipelago, the Netherlands Indies, and China would clear up this misconception, because Islam, which spread among the population of no less than 200,000,000 was nothing but the result of preachings and direct contact with traders, who possessed no other power beyond imparting knowledge. "Muslim Party in Honour of Prophet's Birthday: 'Islam was Spread by Peace' Declares Speaker," *Straits Times*, 5 May 1939, p. 14. Quoted in Chen, "'Just Like Old Friends,'" p. 716.

[416] Zhao, *Xixing riji*, pp. 20-21.

[417] Ibid., p. 66.

Connections based in print media represented on way in which Ma and Zhao experienced, and indeed activated, a concrete example of the interconnectedness of the Islamic world at this time. Beginning with their interaction with Aljelany, Ma and Zhao began to leave in their wake a trans-local trail of interest in their movements on the part of news-reading Muslims. By the time they arrived in the Middle East, they had already become minor celebrities, often being recognized and approached by strangers based on stories that had appeared about their travels in the Arabic press. Aljelany, for his part, published a three-part article in *al-Huda* about Chinese Islam, beginning on 2 January 1933, with the first installment appearing on the front page. Given that this was only three weeks after Aljelany's meeting with Ma and Zhao, and that *al-Huda* had published nothing about Chinese Islam in its two years of existence up to this point despite having correspondents in China writing about Chinese affairs generally, it is more than reasonable to assume that the interaction with Ma and Zhao inspired the article. Notably, the article summarized the origins of Chinese Islam while giving scant treatment to the thirteen hundred years that followed its arrival there, instead arguing that other than the few Muslims, "the Chinese do not have 'religion' as conventionally understood, but a mixture of philosophies into which enters a good deal of superstition."[418] If this did in fact reflect relatively unfiltered views imparted to Aljelany by Zhao, it speaks to Zhao's desire for Muslims outside China to view Islam as having a privileged position in that country. On a different level, Aljelany's publication of the article (particularly the first installment on the front page) suggests Arabic-speaking audiences's receptiveness to news about Chinese Muslims.

The feelings of connectedness Zhao recorded cannot go entirely unqualified. For one, the issue of *madhhab* occasionally arose in each place Ma and Zhao visited. They took some pride in

[418] "Al-Islam fi al-Sin [Islam in China]," *al-Huda*, 2 January 1933, p. 1.

their status as Hanafi, and evidently regarded the Shafi'i believers predominating in the Indian Ocean to be less doctrinally serious. Practical as well as doctrinal considerations also fed into this bias: Zhao recorded that when attending *jum'a* at the Hussein Mosque in Cairo on 6 January 1933, the "imam was Hanafi, so we had an easier time following along."[419] The preoccupation with differences of "school," however, did not prevent Ma and Zhao from visiting the tomb of Imam Shafi'i in Cairo or being impressed by its architecture.[420]

On the other hand, somewhat incongruously given both their preference for the Hanafi *madhhab* and acceptance of the Shafi'i—yet somewhat more understandable in light of their newfound enthusiasm for "correct belief"—Ma, Zhao, and their Chinese Azharite counterparts expressed unreserved approval on several occasions for 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Saud's Wahhabi-inspired reforms to the Hajj, which they saw as necessary checks to "unorthodox practices."[421] On their first visit to the Great Mosque in Mecca on 28 February 1933, Zhao commented "Before, there were four imams leading prayer, one for each *madhhab*; now there is only one, standing in front of the Rock of Abraham (*maqam Ibrahim*), leading all those present in prayer. They will no longer be able to break into their separate groups. For this unification of practice, we must give credit to the Wahhabism of Ibn Saud!"[422] Furthermore, later in their Hajj, after the symbolic stoning of Satan, Zhao reported that one of the soon-to-be Chinese Azharites accompanying them inquired "Why use different sized pillars to represent Satan's size if we don't know Satan's size?' He had asked some of the imams this question, but none had a satisfying answer! If this is an example of the pernicious habit (Ch. *e'xi*; Ar. *bid'a*) of

[419] Zhao, *Xixing riji*, pp. 46-47.

[420] Ibid., p. 61.

[421] Ibid., p. 179.

[422] Ibid., p. 137.

preoccupation with material iconic likenesses, then we must get rid of it!"[423] This statement prompted Zhao to recall a speech the imam Ma Zicheng had made at a Chengda graduation ceremony, in which he said (according to Zhao) "In the beginning the text was clear; men alone made it unclear! In the beginning the Sunna of the Prophet was easy to follow; strange customs alone made it treacherous!"[424] In sum, Ma, Zhao, and their associates evidently felt that 'Abdul 'Aziz and the Wahhabis had imposed a welcome measure of order and orthodoxy on the Hajj, and in some cases were even insisting that that process could be carried on further.

Alternative conceptions of Islamic unity emerged in Cairo, where Ma and Zhao encountered Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib, editor-in-chief of *al-Fath*. At 8:00p.m. on 10 January 1933, Ma and Zhao attended a tea party hosted by the Society of the Straight Path (*Jam'iyyat al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*), where al-Khatib served as secretary. In addition to the members of the society, in attendance was Kamal Kassab, a Palestinian who had served as minister of education in Hijaz; the Azhar Sheikh Muhammad al-Khidr Hussein, a Tunisian; and 'Abdullah bin Ahmad, a Hadrami. The specific topics of conversation are not known, but Zhao recorded that Muhibb al-Din quoted Quran 21:92 ("Indeed this, your community, is one community") and 49:10 ("Verily all the believers are brothers"), clarifying that this did not refer only to the Muslims of a particular place, but to Muslims everywhere. Al-Khatib continued: "Witness, here today at our gathering, we have Palestinians such as Kamal Kassab, Tunisians such as Sheikh al-Khidr Hussein, Syrians such as myself, Hadramis such as 'Abdullah bin Ahmad, and Chinese such as these gentlemen [Did he learn their names?]. But, belonging to the same religion, we have

[423] Ibid., p. 181.

[424] Ibid.

forgotten our differences of nationality and love one another as brothers."[425] Al-Khatib then made a point of drawing a comparison to the *ansar* who awaited and aided the *muhajirin* in Medina, commenting that "They did not see Mecca and Medina as separate places, because all they cared about was that they were the original companions of the Prophet."[426] Al-Khatib implied that the dynamic should be no different in the present between Muslims of various countries.

Al-Khatib had shown interest in the Chinese Muslims from before Ma and Zhao's journey. Zvi Ben-Dor Benite notes that *al-Fath* had published one short article titled "Islam in China," probably authored by al-Khatib, in 1926, and another on the same topic by Dr. Khalid Sheldrake, the famous British convert to Islam, in 1929.[427] Later, during the first year of the Chinese Azharites' study in Egypt, al-Khatib had Ma Jian write a proper history and present description of Islam in China.[428] Ma Jian continued his discussion in a front-page feature later that year.[429] Thereafter, al-Khatib and Sheikh Ibrahim al-Jibali of al-Azhar encouraged Ma Jian to translate the *Analects* of Confucius into Arabic, and even published a biography in *al-Fath* calling him "the perfect Muslim."[430] Clearly, in other words, al-Khatib's interest in Chinese Islam, for one, had already been primed well before Ma and Zhao's arrival in Cairo on 1 January

[425] Zhao, *Xixing riji*, p. 54.

[426] Ibid.

[427] Benite, "Taking 'Abduh to China," p. 256.

[428] "Al-Islam fi-l-Sin: ghabiruhu wa hadiruhu [Islam in China: Past and Present]," *al-Fath*, Thursday of the first week of Ramadan 1351 i.e. 28 December 1932, pp. 12-14.

[429] "Al-Islam fi-l-Sin: ghabiruhu wa hadiruhu [Islam in China: Past and Present]," *al-Fath*, 6 Dhu-l-Qa'da 1351 i.e. 2 March 1933, pp. 1-3, 8-9.

[430] Benite, "Taking 'Abduh to China," p. 258; "Muhammad Makin al-Sini al-Muslim al-Kamil," *al-Fath*, 17 Rabi' al-Awwal 1356 i.e. 27 May 1937, p. 47.

1933. One additional point worth mentioning here is that, much like Abdul Wahid Aljelany in Singapore's *al-Huda*, al-Khatib—and Ma Jian, with his encouragement—referred to their object not as "Chinese Islam" but as "Islam in China."[431]

In addition to al-Khatib's textualist ecumenism, interwar Egypt contained other forms of advocating unity not entirely coterminous with Islam. For example, another figure who took interest in Ma and Zhao was Ahmad Zaki Pasha (1867-1934), a historian and philologist then serving as Egypt's minister of education. In addition to his scholarship, including attendance at the International Congress of Orientalists, Ahmad Zaki Pasha was known for his pan-Arabism and pan-Easternism, and was the first secretary-general of the Society of the Eastern Bond (*Jam'iyyat al-Rabitah al-Sharqiyyah*). This organization's membership also included Rashid Rida, Ahmad Shafiq Pasha (1860-1940, first vice-president of the Egyptian University), Mustafa 'Abd al-Raziq, Sheikh Muhammad Ahmadi al-Zawahiri, and others. Its journal, *al-Rabitah al-Sharqiyyah*, gave regular coverage not only to the Arab world but also to Asian countries including China, India, and Indonesia.[432] In any case, Ma and Zhao were introduced to Ahmad Zaki Pasha by an Indian named Liyajuddin, and met the Egyptian official in his home. While the meeting was symbolically important, Zhao's description makes it sound as though he and Ma were a bit beleaguered by Zaki Pasha's loquaciousness: having hoped to ask him about education in Egypt, they instead sat through anecdotes about Chinese tea and other stories.[433]

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[431] One could argue quite reasonably that the phrase "Chinese Islam" (*zhongguo huijiao*) sounds more natural in Chinese, whereas the phrase "Islam in China" (*al-Islam fi-l-Sin*) sounds more natural in Arabic. On the other hand, the notion that Islam was the more fixed of the two categories—reflected in the Arabic but not the Chinese—represents an instance of untranslatability that cohered with al-Khatib's apparent belief in the fundamental unity of the *umma*.

[432] For example, "The Awakening of the Asian Peoples: The Russo-Japanese War – the nationalist movement in China: its evolution, stages, and victory – Nationalist movements in the Far East – The Asian Community" *al-Rabitah al-Sharqiyyah* 1.2, pp. 1-6.

[433] Zhao, *Xixing riji*, pp. 70-71.

The most compelling rhetorical affirmation of Islamic unity came on 20 January 1933 when King Fu'ad himself invited Ma, Zhao, and other Chinese Muslims in Cairo to attend the last *jum'a* of Ramadan as his guests at the Mosque of 'Amr (the oldest mosque in Egypt and in Africa) in Fustat. Zhao describes the scene as follows:

> We were with the other attendees from al-Azhar, so the usher seated us in the middle of the front row to the left of the *mihrab*. The position could not have been more central. A portion of the hall to the far right was partitioned with cloth to allow the women to pray.
>
> Every stratum of society was represented. Royal guards were stationed at each pillar, and black servants with spray bottles filled the hall with perfumes; several white-clad servants were burning sandalwood incense, moving about left and right in front of the *mihrab*, spreading the redolent fragrances.
>
> At 11:30, the reader (*qari'*) began reciting from Surat al-Kahf. Then, at 12:05, we heard a cannon blast, and counted along as it sounded twenty-one times. When it reached fourteen, the king entered to the accompaniment of military music, followed by a vast retinue. The congregants rose as he proceeded forward, and upon arriving before the *mihrab* he turned and bowed to the people, and then was seated…
>
> The king did not lead prayers himself, but rather appointed Sheikh al-Alawi [?],a famous scholar of the Hanafi *madhhab*, seeing as the king is himself Hanafi. In Egypt, the Shafi'i *madhhab* is more numerous, whereas the Hanafi is more powerful.
>
> Sheikh al-Alawi's *khutbah* consisted of a reminder of the need for the unity of all believers, which he opened with the verse 'Cling fast, ye one and all, and do not let go the great cord of God.' The meaning of this verse is that all believers [Ch. *mumin*] must bring their hearts together in unity.[434]

The scale and symbolic weight of this occasion are considerable, taking place during Ramadan in Egypt's oldest mosque. Moreover, the very prominent position given to the Chinese Muslims at this most important of *jum'a* prayers suggests that the monarchy and the clerical establishment

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[434] Ibid., pp. 64-65. Chinese Muslims had long been familiar with the verse from the *khutbah* from Al Imran (Quran 3:103): "Cling fast, ye one and all, and do not let go the great cord of God." As stated in Chapter Two, this verse appears on the outer wall of the Nanguan Mosque in Yinchuan, Ningxia, and over the *qibla* of the Great Mosque of Tongxin, Ningxia, which dates to the late Ming—and which was the site of a fateful 1936 meeting between CCP forces and local Muslim leaders, resulting in the creation of the very first minority autonomous government. In addition, Pang Shiqian quotes this same verse in the introduction to his Arabic work *China and Islam* as part of a larger discussion asserting that "What has happened to the Muslims in China is the same as what has happened to their brothers in all countries."

could still derive a measure of legitimacy by presenting themselves not only as national rulers but as leading figures in transnational Islam.[435]

The following day, 21 January 1933, Ma, Zhao, and two Chinese Azharites had the opportunity of an audience with King Fu'ad. Having arrived at Abdeen Palace at the appointed time, Ma Songting read a statement in Chinese:

> Your Royal Highness: We four represent Chinese Islamic Progress Association Director Muhammad Yusuf De Shan, Beiping Chengda Academy Board Chairman Imad al-Din Ma Hongkui, and Chengda Dean Muhammad Ali Tang Kesan. These three leaders in turn represent the sincere gratitude of China's fifty million Muslims. We are indebted to Your Majesty for bestowing us this opportunity to be received in your presence, and are greatly honored. It is hard for us to remember a more auspicious occasion.
>
> We present you humble gifts, letters, and photographs on behalf of the three aforementioned leaders, so as to express the profound feeling your favor elicits among all the believers (*mumin*) in China, and our gratitude for hosting the first group of students from China to study at al-Azhar.
>
> We wish to say that Your Majesty is an example to posterity in terms of remembering Islam, and that this is truly a great boon to believers (*mumin*) everywhere, and for this reason we are emboldened this year to send a second group of students to undertake study at al-Azhar.[436]

King Fu'ad agreed to accept new Chinese Azharites and to send Egyptian imams to China, with the stated purpose being "to assist our Chinese brethren in managing their religious affairs."[437]

During a brief stop in Jerusalem, Ma and Zhao had a productive meeting with the grand mufti Hajj Amin al-Husayni, who referred them to some contacts in the Hijaz (see later sections of this chapter as well as Chapter Six regarding Chinese Muslims' interactions with al-Husayni). Ma and Zhao proceeded to Mecca, arriving in late February 1933. Early on, they paid a visit to the Saudi deputy minister of foreign affairs, Sulayman, introduced to them by al-Husayni. Zhao

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[435] Martin S. Kramer, *Islam Assembled: The Advent of the Muslim Congresses* (Columbia UP, 1986). Although the moment of the so-called Caliphate congresses had already faded by this point, such scenes recall the brief moment in 1926 when Egyptians contemplated claiming leadership of a revived Caliphate.

[436] Zhao, *Xixing riji*, pp. 67-68.

[437] Ibid., p. 68.

says Sulayman "expressed disapproval upon hearing that we were visiting other countries…he said: 'The purpose of the Hajj is to meet one's Muslim brethren from all over the world in a single place; the customs, clothing, languages…each one is different. If you take care during your visit here, you can grasp the basic outline of Islam's conditions in all places.'"[438] Sulayman's primary concern was for the religious legitimacy of the new Saudi state, which had conquered the Hijaz in 1925 and only formed a unified country in 1932. Not yet entirely secure about Saudi rule over the Holy Cities, he undoubtedly wished to discourage visitors to the region from giving too much credence to alternative centers of Islamic authority.

Motives aside, however, Sulayman's statement about the Hajj itself was not inaccurate as far as Ma and Zhao were concerned. It would be an understatement to say that the pilgrimage clearly held emotional weight. After journeying from Mina to Mount Arafat on 4 April, Ma, Zhao, and the approximately sixty Chinese Hajjis that year found their tent, marked with a green flag and the flag of the Republic of China. There they held a special prayer: "Once we had completed the *salat al-'asr*, the lead Chinese Hajji conducted all the Chinese pilgrims, with our faces turned in the direction of the *ka'ba*, in a specially long prayer, including the *tawbah* and others, to the point that everyone became hoarse and tears streamed down their faces."[439] That night, they joined their coreligionists gazing at the night sky and gathering pebbles for the stoning of the Devil. Returning from Mount Arafat to Mina, they recounted the tale of Abraham and Ishmael, dwelling on Abraham's unwavering faith in God and refusal to be deterred by

[438] Ibid., p. 138.

[439] Ibid., p. 176.

Satan. Zhao was moved to comment: "I think Sima Qian's *Shiji* or Columbus's discovery of the New World do not compare with this story."[440]

In addition to completing the ritual stations, Ma and Zhao also continued (as Sulayman promised) to encounter fellow Muslims from several countries, particularly Indians and Jawis. On 9 April, during Eid al-Adha, a Jawi youth named Abdul Wahid Hassan stopped them, having found information on their journey in Egyptian and Palestinian newspapers. Zhao agreed to meet with him the following day, at which time Zhao told him about "Chinese Muslims' current conditions and about old and new educational circumstances, specifically about the Chengda, Wanxian, Mingde, Xiejin, and Beiping Xibei Gongxue"; he also told him about Chinese Muslim social conditions and publications. Abdul Wahid then told Zhao that educational reform and the division between old and new was very similar in Java, and noted that the overseas Chinese (*huaqiao*) in Java "love Islam and want Chinese Muslims to come to Java to help them convert."[441] While it would appear that Ma and Zhao were occasionally taken aback by the enthusiasm of perfect strangers, such serendipitous encounters no doubt contributed as much if not more than formal events to their perception of the interconnectedness of the Islamic world.

Ma and Zhao's Hajj, of course, also carried direct implications for the status of Islam in China. Under normal circumstances, Republican-era Chinese Muslim elites generally only went abroad with the intention of returning to China. Zhao Zhenwu's purchase of the Arabic type is the most obvious example, for (as argued in Chapter Two), it enabled not only *Yuehua*, but also government organs such as the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission, to print in Arabic. The

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[440] Ibid., p. 177.

[441] Ibid., pp. 181-82.

other effect of Ma and Zhao's journey, however, was to lay a groundwork of personal connections that benefitted Chinese Muslim diplomatic efforts during the war with Japan.

The Wartime Delegations: Propaganda, Espionage, Fraternity, Performance

During China's war with Japan, elite Chinese Muslims' narrative of Islam's peacefulness and contributions to China, the origins and pre-war development of which were detailed in Chapters Two and Three, now took on a clear new significance. The Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation (*Zhongguo huijiao jiuguo xiehui*), established in Wuhan in October 1938 as Muslim leaders retreated inland with the GMD government, produced numerous publications that tirelessly reiterated this narrative of contribution and highlighted example after example of Muslims' support for China's war effort.

As importantly, the National Salvation Federation coordinated a number of concrete wartime initiatives involving high-profile Chinese Muslims. One set of initiatives was the little-known "Northwest Propaganda Corps" (*Xibei xuanchuan tuan*), sometimes also called "Northwest Morale Corps" (*Xibei xuanwei tuan*) organized apparently in 1937, 1938, and 1939.[442] On 21 September 1938, in one of the better-documented occasions, one of these Northwest Propaganda Corps under one Wang Yuebo worked with military officials in Xi'an under General Jiang Dingwen to organize an event at Revolution Park in Xi'an, claimed to have been attended by 50,000 people. It was an excellent photo opportunity, with images published in *Dongfang huakan* along with Chinese and English captions. Speeches were delivered, slogans were chanted. Sun Jinyun, representing the Muslims of the Northwest, gave an address "explaining the significance of the occasion." After that, Wang's speech declared that "the

[442] The sources are not clear on how many of these there were. The *ZGHJJDFWTRJ* and other private materials refer to them at various points, but not always in a manner that allows them to be pinpointed chronologically.

Chinese Mohammedans of the Northwest would never become tools of the aggressor." Finally, Da Pusheng—who had just opened his Islamic school in nearby Pingliang, and who was identified in *Dongfang huakan* as a "leader of the local Mohammedans"—offered a "prayer for an early Chinese victory" before the assembled crowd. A flag exchange ceremony also took place: one silk banner with an Arabic inscription and GMD sun-and-sky emblem was presented to the officials of the Northwest Propaganda Corps, while four similar silk banners were presented "by the Muslims of the Northwest" to General Jiang, all accompanied by a military band before a "saluting audience." The event closed with a parade through the city. In the meantime, "propagandistic literature" was produced for those in attendance, featuring the GMD emblem and Quranic excerpts such as 2:190 ("Fight in the way of God those who fight against you, but do not commit excesses"), 2:194 ("Whoever has assaulted you, assault him in the same way"), and 2:216 ("Fighting has been enjoined upon you though it be hateful to you"), written in Arabic and translated into Chinese.[443]

[443] "Xibei huibao yonghu zhongyang xianqi dahui: Xibei xuanchuantuan suo yong hui han wen biaoyu zhi yi [Northwest Muslim Compatriots 'Support for Central Government and Flag Presentation Conference': Northwest Propaganda Corps Uses Slogans in Muslim and Han Languages]," *Dongfang huakan* 1/9 (1938): p. 13. Quotations are from the English captions in *Dongfang huakan*'s coverage of the event.

IMAGE 1: *Dongfang huakan*'s coverage of the 21 September 1938 Northwest Propaganda Corps event in Xi'an. Clockwise from top left: Wang Yuebo of Northwest Propaganda Corps receiving flag with Arabic inscription and GMD emblem; bilingual propaganda materials with Quranic excerpts; parade; Da Pusheng leading the "victory prayer." Source: *Dongfang huakan*.

While all that was taking place, the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation was also organizing diplomatic missions of Chinese Muslims (in many cases, members of the diplomatic missions would participate in the Northwest Propaganda Corps upon returning to China). The first diplomatic initiative, known as the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation

(*Zhongguo huijiao jindong fangwentuan*), took shape in Nanjing in November 1937, only a matter of weeks before the city's fall. The Near East Delegation originally planned to be abroad for six months, but noted that "if necessary, the time can be extended mid-journey."[444] The total eventually reached over fourteen months (26 November 1937 to 25 January 1939). The delegation's stated purpose was to "propagandize our country's resolve in the War of Resistance, to oppose all forms of Japanese imperialism, to articulate the important status of our Chinese Muslim brethren in China, and to bear the great responsibility of saving our nation from destruction."[445] In 1942, Tang Kesan summarized the mission felt that the mission had been a success, and summarized it as follows:

> Some Muslim countries of the Near East did not yet understand clearly China's cause in the war…Due to the fact that China has fifty million Muslims and that we share a common set of beliefs, we felt that the Muslim countries of the Middle East should be sympathetic to us, and appreciate what we had to say if we were to impress upon them China's cause in this War of Resistance. In an attempt to thwart the Japanese barbarians' [*wokou*; derogatory] despicable conspiracies, we organized a "Near East goodwill delegation" to raise awareness among the countries of the Near East and to carry out propaganda [toward them] [*dao qi jindong ge guo, congshi xuanchuan*].[446]

The Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation published a detailed diary and report of the Near East Delegation's activities in 1941-42.[447] These materials, accounting for every single day abroad in over six hundred pages, accomplished much more than simply informing the government that the missions had been completed successfully. They also provided an

[444] Xue Wenbo et al., *Zhongguo huijiao jindong fangwentuan riji* [*Diary of the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation*] (Chongqing: Zhongguo huijiao jiuguo xiehui, 1941), p. 3. Hereafter "*ZGHJJDFWTRJ*."

[445] *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, p. 2.

[446] Tang Kesan, "Foreword," in *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, p. i.

[447] Xue Wenbo prepared the diary of the Near East Delegation. *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, p. iii.

opportunity to reinforce in no uncertain terms that loyalty to China formed a distinctive and integral component of Chinese Muslims' identity. That is, they were a "large and important portion of the Chinese nation, who are ordinarily law-abiding and have no quarrel with anyone," were acting "under the guidance of the central government" in order to "unify hearts and minds" and "win the support of Muslim countries" for China's cause in the war.[448] An early public statement by the delegation, later republished as a preface to its diary, felt obliged to add that "Muslims in all parts of occupied North China are bravely rising up [against the enemy]."[449] As Yufeng Mao points out, this statement even distanced Chinese Muslims from Mongolians, Manchus, and Tibetans, alleging that these groups either had ignobly accepted Japanese occupation or lived too far from the coast to make a difference in the war, asking rhetorically "Who could [sic] carry the grave responsibility of saving [the nation] and ensuring [its] survival? Only the Han and the Hui."[450] Even before they set sail, the delegation helped give leading Chinese Muslims the political legitimacy to make such assertions, some of which were contrary to fact.[451] The statement further noted that "For over twenty years, Japan has focused considerable attention on Muslims, sending emissaries, some of whom falsely converted to Islam. They infiltrated the Northwest, living alongside Muslims there, always acting deceitfully to realize a sinister plot. Muslims, however, patriotically refused to accept any of this. After the Mukden Incident of 1931, the Japanese even formed an Islamic association at Changchun,

[448] Tang Kesan, "Foreword (1942)," *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, p. iii; "Statement by the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation, Hankou, December 1937," *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, pp. iv-v.

[449] "Statement by the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation, Hankou, December 1937," *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, iv. See also Mao, "Muslim Vision," p. 383.

[450] *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, p. 1.

[451] Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim"; Hammond, "Conundrum of Collaboration."

pressuring Muslims of the Northeast to join. The Northeast Muslims swallowed this insult, wrongfully accepting the plan under Japanese oppression."[452]

Again, personnel was policy. The Near East Delegation's five members were carefully chosen wealthy, worldly, and well-connected Chinese Muslims from the urban coastal regions, members or allies of the GMD party and government, and supporters of Chinese Muslims' modernist movement. Highly educated and articulate, and exceedingly genteel in their writing (even when composing in a second, third, or fourth language), they embodied a gentlemanly Islam that formed an important component of the "public Islam" that served the Chinese Muslims well in numerous contexts.

The delegation leader, Wang Zengshan (1903-61), son of an old Muslim family of Linqing, Shandong, graduated from Beijing's Yenching (Yanjing) University, and then proceeded to study abroad in Turkey at the University of Istanbul in the mid-1920s. This period, of course, was the height of Ataturk's virulently anti-Islamic and anti-traditionalist reforms—a time when most foreign Muslim students were beginning to avoid study in Istanbul, its madrasa system abolished by the new nationalist state. Chiang Kai-shek, the GMD, and even some of its elite Chinese Muslim allies, however, admired Turkey's "successful modernization," and disregarded or failed to recognize the anti-Islamic character of the reforms. Upon returning, Wang served several years as a government official in Xinjiang, evidently applying his knowledge of Turkish (and perhaps contacts made in Istanbul as well). He also became a member of the GMD government's Legislative Council.[453] As Mao notes, in 1931 Wang

[452] "Statement by the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation, Hankou, December 1937," *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, iv.

[453] Biographical details from Rosey Ma, "Hj. Jelaluddin Wang Zengshan," Wang Zengshan Papers, NUS Central Library (CH – Reference Office BP63*Chi.Wz).

accompanied Dai Jitao, president of the GMD Examination Yuan and a major advocated of the integration of frontier peoples, on a tour of Xinjiang.[454] When not in Xinjiang, he was also active in the new capital, Nanjing, where he published the pro-government periodicals *Zhongguo huijiao qingnian xuehui huibao* (*Chinese Muslim Youth Society Bulletin*, 1936-37) and *Huijiao qingnian yuebao* (*Muslim Youth Monthly*, 1936-37). Early in the war, the second bulletin was renamed *Huijiao qingnian* (1938-47) and published by Shi Juemin from Lanzhou, Gansu, including sections in Arabic and Turkish meant to educate local Muslims in patriotism and the "Three Principles of the People"—part of the government's wartime Sinicization efforts directed at frontier Muslims (see Chapter Two).[455] Wang's knowledge of Turkish and experience in the Middle East were cited as the reason for his selection as head of the Near East delegation.[456] Immediately before or during the delegation's mission, Wang became a member of the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation, along with two other delegation members—and, again, many of the Chinese Muslims' most prominent military, political, religious, intellectual, and communal leaders.[457] He was also listed as a member of Chen Lifu's Frontier Cultural Progress Association, along with many of the same figures from the National Salvation Federation as well

[454] Mao, "Muslim Vision," p. 385. Mao adds that this visit to Xinjiang resulted in about a dozen Uyghur Muslim youths being recruited to study in Nanjing. As we saw in Chapter Two, bringing frontier students to study in the Han-dominated coastal regions was an important integrationist strategy on the part of the GMD government. On Dai's work with Tibetan Buddhists, see Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists*.

[455] The front cover of the *Chinese Muslim Youth Society Bulletin* featured Quran 9:41.

[456] Tang Kesan, foreword to *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*.

[457] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五 (2) – 130. Again, the leadership of the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation was as follows: (1) President: Bai Chongxi (2) Directors: Tang Kesan, Sun Shengwu, Shi Zizhou, and Ma Liang (3) Supervisors: Da Pusheng, Wang Jingzhai, Ha Decheng, and Ma Songting, the "Four Great Imams" (4) Managers: Ma Tianying; Zhang Zhaoli; Ai Yizai, a patron of the Muslim community of Beijing; Bai Shouyi; Wang Mengyang and Li Tingbi, both authors and editors for *Yuehua*; Shi Juemin, associate of Wang Zengshan and editor-in-chief of his Nanjing-then-Lanzhou-based *Chinese Muslim Youth Society Bulletin*; and several Chinese Azharites including Sha Guozhen (head of the Chinese Azhar missions), Na Zhong (a prolific Yunnanese translator), and Ding Zhongming (future Taiwanese ambassador to Libya).

as several leading Han government officials (see Chapter Two).[458] After returning from his work with the Near East delegation, Wang was again stationed in Urumqi as head of the GMD government's Xinjiang Civilian Affairs Bureau (*Xinjiang sheng minzheng ting*).[459]

The Near East Delegation's vice president was Ma Tianying (1900-1982). Born in Beijing, but also of an old Shandong Muslim lineage, Ma was a prominent businessman and scholar. He was educated at the College Français de Pekin and pursued further study in Paris.[460] After returning to China, he worked from 1923 to 1931 as a supply manager on the Longhai Railway at Xuzhou and Haizhou, the line's eastern terminus near Shanghai (see Chapter Two).[461] After that, he was based primarily in Shanghai, where he worked as a teacher at the Nieh Chich Kuei Public School and helped Da Pusheng and Ha Decheng organize protests in response to the Islamophobic materials published in the non-Muslim Chinese press (see Chapter Three).[462] Yufeng Mao states that the Near East Delegation was Ma's idea, proposed to the GMD government and Muslim leaders in fall 1937.[463] Like Wang Zengshan, Ma became a member of the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation by virtue of his work with the delegation.

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[458] Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing) 五（2）－1002.

[459] Wang's journal from late-1940s Xinjiang is included in the NUS materials. Wang Zengshan, *Xin zheng jiyao* [*Xinjiang Government Meeting Notes*] (Dihua i.e. Urumqi: n.p., 1946-49).

[460] An English-language resume from the 1940s gives Ma's date of birth as 1901, whereas later materials from Malaysia sometimes give it as 1900. The same English-language 1940s resume states that he studied at the Sorbonne, whereas an English letter of recommendation from the 1930s and a Chinese resume from the 1940s, both in the same file, state that he studied at the University of Paris, Licence des Lettres. Yet another resume from Malaysia in the late 1960s or 1970s again says it was the Sorbonne. In addition, it is sometimes claimed that Ma worked as a translator in France during the First World War, but if this is the case, it does not appear in his resumes from the 1940s.

[461] Ma Tianying CV and Longhai work certificate, Ma Tianying Papers, Centre for Malaysian Chinese Studies, Kuala Lumpur.

[462] Some Chinese-language materials on Ma state that he worked during the 1930s at the Turkish consulate in Shanghai, but this institution did not exist until 1937. It is unclear where this apparent misinformation originated.

[463] Mao, "Muslim Vision."

After returning from the Near East Delegation, Ma was a member of the Northwest Propaganda Corps (*Xibei xuanchuan tuan*), which attempted to boost support for the war effort across the Northwest, and which Chiang Kai-shek briefly joined in person. From late 1939 to early 1941, Ma led the Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation, whose purpose was also to propagandize China's cause in the war in neutral Muslim countries, and to seek wartime medical aid (see end of Chapter Three). Like Wang Zengshan, Ma continued working as a GMD official after the war, in this case as the new consul-general in Ipoh, Malaysia.

The remaining members were less prominent but still significant. The third was Zhang Zhaoli, also a member of the National Salvation Federation, and an occasional author for *Yuehua* and other Muslim and non-Muslim Chinese publications.[464] The fourth was Xue Wenbo, a more frequent contributor to *Yuehua*, and a consistent supporter of frontier development who had spend considerable time promoting GMD and Chinese Muslim modernist agendas in the Northwest.[465] The fifth was Wang Shiming, a Chinese Azharite and former Chengda student who had traveled to Egypt with Ma Songting and Zhao Zhenwu in 1932, and joined the Near East

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[464] Zhang Zhaoli's extant publications include "Dongfang minzu de xin qixiang yu bianhua [The New Atmosphere and Changes among the Nations of the East]," *Minzhong wenyi* 22 (1925), pp. 172-73; "You Tuerqi paiqian gongshi lai hua tandao turen dui wo kangzhan de guancha [A Diplomatic Envoy from Turkey Discusses Turkish People's Views of our War of Resistance]," *Yuehua* 11/34-35-36 (1939), pp. 5-6; "Tuerqi fangwen zhuiji [Memories of Visiting Turkey]," *Waijiao jikan* [*Foreign Affairs Quarterly*] 1/3 (1940), pp. 131-34; "Yisilan xintu duiyu Zhongguo Guomindang dangyuan shouze yingyou de renshi [What Muslims need to know about the Guomindang's Rules and Regulations for Party Members]," *Xunlian yuekan* [Political Training Monthly] 2/4 (1941), pp. 73-87; "Afuhan de minzu ji qi zhengzhi [Afghanistan: People and Politics]," *A'ertai* [*Altai*] ½ (1945), pp. 22-24.

[465] Yufeng Mao provides the following details on Xue: "As a college student in the early 1930s, Xue Wenbo, another delegate, founded the Beiping (Beijing) Muslim Student Organization, which tried to promote Islamic learning among young Muslims. In opposition to GMD efforts to ban Sino-Muslims calling themselves huizu, Xue changed the name of the Beiping Muslim Student Organization to "Chinese Huizu Youth Organization" and edited a journal titled Huizu Youth. In 1932, both Xue and Ma Tianying, another delegate who was fluent in French and English and had worked in France as an interpreter during World War I, organized countrywide Muslim protests following several incidents in which Han publishers printed insulting accounts of Islam. Although they sought to pursue a career within the KMT state, the weakness of state power permitted them a degree of freedom to put pressure on the government and to oppose key government policies on issues involving Muslim interests." Mao, "Muslim Vision," p. 382.

Delegation from there. Wang was selected in particular for his "mastery of Arabic."[466] After five years in Egypt, his conversational abilities far exceeded those of any of the other four delegation members, making him an indispensable asset.[467]

In addition to these five, two other leading Chinese Muslims temporarily joined the Near East Delegation from Egypt, remaining with the group through their Hajj in February 1938. The first was Da Pusheng. Da, already sixty-one years old, had escaped the Japanese invasion, taking a loan of 3,000 yuan and leaving the country by himself in December 1937. Like Wang Zengshan and Ma Tianying, Da had heard that Japan was dispatching propaganda agents to the Islamic world, and was determined to counter it. In addition to the Hajj, he stopped in Egypt and India to argue China's case in the war. Upon returning to China, he coordinated directly with Chiang Kai-shek to reopen his defunct Shanghai Islamic Normal School in Pingliang, Gansu (see Chapter Two).[468] The second was Sha Guozhen of Yunnan's Mingde Upper School, leader of the Chinese dormitory (*riwaq*) at al-Azhar in Cairo from 1931, who used his position as leader of the Chinese Azharites to propagandize in Arabic about China's cause against Japan, both after the Mukden Incident in September 1931, and again after returning from his Hajj.[469]

The Near East Delegation members were of course all Muslims, but they were also all fundamentally political actors fulfilling a political role. Personal piety and early education aside,

[466] *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, pp. 58-59; Mao, "Muslim Vision," p. 382.

[467] Xue Wenbo admitted as much when they picked up Wang Shiming in Suez: *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, p. 70.

[468] Da Jie, "Da Pusheng ahong zhuanlue."

[469] Muhammad Ibrahim Shah Kwujin [a.k.a. Sha Guozhen], "Burkan al-sharq al-aqsa kama yusawwiruhu ahad al-Siniyyin [The Cauldron of the Far East, as Described by a Chinese]," al-Ma'rifa al-Masriyya, 1 November 1932, pp. 1329-30; "Risalat muslimi al-Sin ila muslimi al-'alam 'an haqa'iq al-harb al-siniyya al-yabaniyya al-qa'ima [A Letter from the Muslims of China to the Muslims of the World on the Facts of the Present Sino-Japanese War]," *al-Risala*, 23 May 1938, p. 870-71.

they were not trained as imams or *ulama*. Though highly knowledgeable of the affairs of Chinese and global Islam and frequent commentators thereupon, they were not experts in a formal religious or academic sense. Even Wang Shiming, despite being trained at Chengda and al-Azhar, became a GMD diplomat at the first Chinese consulate in Saudi Arabia in the early 1940s.[470] Indeed, the GMD and National Salvation Federation may have been wary of staffing the Near East Delegation with "religious" personnel. It is ironic, therefore, that this delegation as well as the later Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation consistently identified themselves to various authorities abroad as a "religious and not a political delegation." In truth it was the opposite. As the Near East Delegation's own statements as well as its members' careers plainly show, the purpose of the mission was to build upon or appeal to sentiments of Islamic solidarity in order to make an argument on behalf of China's national interests. Such activities paid dividends for their own relationships with the GMD government, as well as for the sociopolitical security of Muslims in China.[471]

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[470] Wang's statement on Quran translation in Chapter One suggests that he may have been more interested in "politics" than "religion" from the beginning.

[471] The GMD government, specifically Chiang Kai-shek and Chen Lifu, sponsored equivalent initiatives by Chinese Buddhists toward India. In 1939, Zhu Jiahua (1893-1963), a member of the GMD Central Executive Committee and chair of the Sino-Indian Cultural Society, met Jawaharlal Nehru during the latter's visit to China. In October of that year, Zhu and Chen Lifu wrote to Chiang Kai-shek arguing that the Sino-Indian Cultural Society could be used as a "'front organization' to promote contacts between the GMD and the [Indian National Congress] 'through seemingly benign religious, academic and educational exchanges.'" Shortly thereafter, the Buddhist monk Taixu undertook a government-sponsored "goodwill mission" to India similar to that of the Chinese Muslims. Tansen Sen, *India, China, and the World: A Connected History* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017), p. 312; Brian Tsui, "The Plea for Asia—Tan Yunshan, Pan-Asianism, and Sino-Indian Relations," *China Report: A Journal of East Asian Studies* 46.4 (November 2010): p. 356. As Sen notes, the document in question is introduced in Brian Tsui, "China's Forgotten Revolution: Radical Conservatism in Action, 1925-1949," (PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 2013), p. 242. Materials regarding GMD-sponsored Buddhist delegations to India and the South Seas can be found at Academia Sinica's Modern History Archive: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 020-019908-0001 (the 1940 mission) and 11-29-19-05-004 (the 1944-45 mission also involving Taixu).

Taixu's career and writings suggest that the GMD government saw him as playing an analogous role vis-à-vis Tibet to that of the Chinese Muslim elites vis-à-vis the Northwest and Xinjiang. Many of Taixu's writings were published by the Nanjing-based Xin Yaxiya ("New Asia") group, a major node of pro-government intellectual production regarding China's frontiers that, among other materials, also published Tang Kesan's *Fu Kang riji* (*Diary of a Journey to Kham*, 1934; see Chapter Two).

Actual pay mattered as well. According to documents from the GMD Ministry of Defense, each member of the Near East Delegation received funds to cover accomodations (600 yuan each for Wang Zengshan and Ma Tianying, 400 each for Xue Wenbo and Zhang Zhaoli), steamer passage from Hong Kong (400 yuan each), clothing (550 yuan each; they usually wore matching white linen suits and fez-style hats featuring a star and crescent), "guest expenditures" (1170 each, except for Wang Shiming, 810; presumably to cover meals or tea with those they met), and living stipends (2000 for Ma, 1500 each for Xue and Zhang, 800 for Wang Shiming; Wang Zengshan apparently elected to forego his living stipend). The total, then, was 2,720 yuan for Wang Zengshan, 4,720 for Ma, 4,020 each for Xue and Zhang, and 2,160 for Wang Shiming, or 17,640 yuan for the five men combined.[472] These were large sums for individuals at the time, but small compared to the GMD government's other wartime expenditures.[473]

The delegation used their long stretches of time at sea to prepare propaganda materials in Arabic, English, and Turkish, which they then published upon arrival in the relevant countries.[474] Based on what is known of the delegation members' language skills, the lead authors must have been Wang Shiming for the Arabic, Ma Tianying for the English, and Wang Zengshan for the Turkish, though the five men undoubtedly conferred on all versions prior to their publication. Ostensibly intended to convey identical information about China's war with Japan and Chinese Muslims' role therein, the three versions in fact display considerable discrepancies. Wang

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[472] "Zhongguo huijiao jindong fangwentuan jianyi shu [Policy Recommendations of the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation] (May 1939)," KMT Archives, Ministry of Defense Collection 003/824.

[473] Mitter, *China's War with Japan*.

[474] The Arabic version was printed by the well-known publishing house of 'Isa al-Babi al-Halabi in Cairo; the Turkish version was printed Alaeddin Kiral Basimevi in Ankara; the English version was probably printed in India, but this was not specified in the surviving materials.

Shiming's Arabic version opened with a *bismillah* and referred to the Near East Delegation as a "Chinese Islamic fraternal delegation" (*ba'that al-ikha' al-islamiyya al-siniyya*). The text provided a lengthy exposition of Islam's arrival in China by the land and sea routes; of Islam's subsequent history in China; and of the present conditions of Islam in China, including "expanding and reforming education," "strengthening relations with Muslims of the world," "publishing periodicals," "translating the Quran," "uniting Muslims in China," and "[promoting] Muslim youth activities." Wang did not address China's present situation or the war with Japan until the eleventh page. This prioritization bears the imprint of Wang's time at al-Azhar, which above all stressed Islamic educational reform and Muslims' cooperation. Wang's Arabic version also closed with a discussion, absent from the other versions, of "what Chinese Muslims anticipate after the war," which included both more equal representation in China and expanded relations with Muslims outside China.[475]

By contrast, Ma Tianying's English version appealed strongly to Islamic fraternity, but less so to Islamic "religion" per se. Ma appears to have modeled the text on Indian Muslims' English writings, employing phrases such as the "call to world Muslims" and the "brillian[ce] of Islam in the Far East." Unlike the Arabic version, Ma's English text provided only a three-paragraph survey of Islam's past and present in China before turning to the war with Japan at the bottom of the second page, and continued on that theme for the remaining five pages, stressing especially Chinese Muslims' sacrifices in the war. Citing Quran 2:190 ("Fight in the way of God those who fight against you, but do not commit excesses"), Ma distinguished between China's

[475] Wang Shiming et al., "Risalat ba'that al-ikha' al-islamiyya al-siniyya ila al-'alam al-islami 'an al-islam wa-l-muslimin fi-l-sin [Letter of the Chinese Islamic Fraternal Delegation to the Islamic World Regarding Islam and Muslims in China] (1938)," filed with "Policy Recommendations Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation (May 1939)," KMT Party Archives (Taipei), Ministry of Defense Collection 003/824.

defensive resistance struggle versus Japan's war of aggression: "We are within the limits, but Japan is over the limits." In addition, the businessman Ma warned his English-speaking readers that Japan planned to prey upon world markets "by pushing out her cheap but un-durble goods," calling upon them to produce domestically and boycott Japanese-manufactured products.[476]

Wang Zengshan's Turkish version fell between the Arabic and English in terms of its attention to the war. It also presented the Chinese Muslims most overtly as representatives of the Chinese nation, and that Chinese nation as one where Islam and Muslims were important but subordinate. This version printed side-by-side official portraits of Sun Yat-sen, Lin Sen, Chiang Kai-shek, Bai Chongxi, and the Near East Delegation members, something the other versions appear not to have done. At the same time, however, it identified the delegation members using entirely Turkified versions of their names: Celâleddin Vanzinšan, Ibrahim Matienyin, Davud Šuevinpo, Yusuf Cancaoli, and Saad Vanšimin. Unlike the Arabic, but like the English, the Turkish text did not begin with a *bismillah*, but opened only with "Dear Coreligionists" (*sayin dindaslar*).[477]

The delegation's written propaganda materials were not limited to the above. In May 1938, toward the end of their stay in Cairo, the delegation learned of the opening of the Tokyo Mosque that same month, a project supported by the Central Asian Islamic activists Abdürrešid Ibrahim (1853-1944) and Muhammaed Abdülhay Kurban Ali (a.k.a. M.G. Kurban Galiev, 1892-1972).[478] The delegation rushed to produce a letter in Arabic, which noted that some dignitaries

[476] Ma Tianying et al., "The Call to World Muslims from China, with Compliments of Chinese Muslim Near-East Goodwill Mission (1938)," p. 5, filed with "Policy Recommendations Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation (May 1939)," KMT Party Archives (Taipei), Ministry of Defense Collection 003/824.

[477] Celâleddin Vanzinšan [a.k.a. Wang Zengshan] et al., "Çin Müslümanlari – Yakm Šark Muhadenet Heyeti [The Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation] (1938)," filed with "Policy Recommendations Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation (May 1939)," KMT Party Archives (Taipei), Ministry of Defense Collection 003/824.

[478] Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim"; Hammond, "Conundrum of Collaboration," pp. 195-96.

from around the Islamic world had attended the mosque's opening ceremony. Reiterating the warning that Japan's overtures to Islam and Muslims were cynically motivated and imperialistic, the letter stressed that "the Japanese cling categorically to their pagan faith and Buddhist traditions (*mutamassikun bi-dianatihim al-wathniyya wa taqalidihim al-budhiyya kull al-tamassuk*), and accept no religious doctrines other than this." From here, the letter appealed to its readers on the basis that Islam was "a religion of moderation (*din mu'tadil*)" and a "straight path that aids the downtrodden (*sirat mustaqim yusa'id al-mustad'afin*)" and "treats people with justice and equality (*al-'adl wa-l-musawa*)." As such, it was inherently opposed to colonialism, which it said Japan was practicing.[479]

Quite separately from these determined multilingual appeals, the Near East Delegation's representation of its own propaganda activities itself performed a propagandistic function toward the GMD government and China's Muslims. In April 1939, after returning to China, Wang Zengshan wrote a letter to Chiang Kai-shek to provide a concluding report on the delegation's work. He summarized the delegation's accomplishments as "rectification of mentalities (*xinli gaizheng*), rectification of public opinion (*yulun gaizheng*), [encouraging] of sympathy for our country's war of resistance, [encouraging] boycott of Japanese goods, collection of medical donations, calling upon organizations, explaining our country's needs in the war of resistance to dignitaries and youths in all countries, establishing a Sino-Egyptian Cultural Association (*Zhong-Ai wenhua xiehui*), and establishing relations between our country and the countries of the

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[479] "Zhongguo huijiao jindong fangwentuan wei dongjing jianzhu qingzhensi kaimu dianli gao shijie huimin shu (alabowen) [The Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation Message to the World's Muslims Regarding the Opening of the Tokyo Mosque (in Arabic)] a.k.a. "Ba'that al-ikha' al-islamiyya al-siniyya ila al-mamalik al-islamiyya [Letter from the Chinese Islamic Fraternal Delegation to the Islamic Countries] (May 1938)." Filed with "Policy Recommendations Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation (May 1939)," KMT Party Archives (Taipei), Ministry of Defense Collection 003/824.

Middle East.[480] While the delegation did indeed undertake all these activities and even saw some bear fruit, the list is somewhat redundant, and, strictly speaking, does not establish beyond a reasonable doubt that the delegation fundamentally altered the course of China's war effort. The claim that the delegation successfully changed people's minds was particularly generous, and on the whole is not supported by Xue Wenbo's descriptions of the delegation's meetings. In general, those who already sympathized with China continued to do so, and those who did not may have engaged in protracted discussions but did not clearly change their positions. The claim of having "rectified mentalities" was, rather, primarily an attempt to affirm to Chiang Kai-shek and the GMD government that foreign Muslims accepted the delegation as representing the Muslims of China and, on that basis, that the delegation was capable of influencing the opinions of those foreign Muslims. Indeed, the main concrete accomplishment of the delegation was merely to gain the GMD government's approval to continue its propaganda activities. Wang's letter asks Chiang Kai-shek to form a "Near East cultural association" (*Jindong wenhua xiehui*) that could "print Arabic and Turkish periodicals in order to connect our country with the countries of the Near East…and propagandize based on the current conditions of the war of resistance (*yi goutong woguo yu jindong ge guo jian zhi wenhua…ji xuanchuan kangzhan shikuang*)." It is unclear whether the GMD government formed a Near East cultural association, but the Chinese Muslims in Chongqing did continue disseminating propaganda in Arabic and other languages, both in writing and by radio broadcast.[481]

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[480] By contrast, as Kelly Hammond has shown, the Japanese-sponsored Hajj delegation, though less well-credentialed both religiously and politically than the GMD-sponsored delegation, nevertheless helped set in motion Saudi Arabia's granting Japan an oil concession. Hammond, "Conundrum of Collaboration," pp. 197-98.

[481] Wang Zengshan to Chiang Kai-shek, "Guofang zuigao weiyuanhui: Zhongguo huijiao jindong fangwentuan baogaoshu [Supreme Committee for National Defense: Report of the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation] (May 1939)." Filed with "Policy Recommendations Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation (May 1939)," KMT Party Archives (Taipei), Ministry of Defense Collection 003/824.

Unsurprisingly, the Near East Delegation's journey itself brought far more ambiguities, curiosities, vicissitudes, and impromptu exchanges than its propaganda would suggest. Despite the ostensible single-mindedness of their mission, the delegation members could not help but exhibit some excitement, even in their official diary, at this opportunity for sustained contact with the peoples of the Islamic world—in their words, "court and commoners" (*chaoye renshi*) alike. They meant this literally: among others, they held meetings with members of the Alsagoff family, an Indian Ocean commercial empire and patriarch of the Singapore Hadrami community; King 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Saud, king of Saudi Arabia; and Hajj Amin al-Husayni, grand mufti of Jerusalem; they also attempted to meet with Muhammad Ali Jinnah, future president of Pakistan. At the same time, the diary also recorded their interactions with longshoremen, drivers, students, and various other "ordinary" people from each country they visited. Meeting with Muslim heads of state clearly served the delegation's performative, charismatic function with respect to the GMD government and other Chinese audiences, demonstrating spectacularly that Chinese Muslim leaders were indeed respected and respectable enough to command the attention of such powerful and illustrious figures. Relatedly, such meetings also implied a strong statement to the various communities of Muslims in China, that the elite Chinese Muslims allied to the GMD were the sole legitimate representatives of Islam in China to both the government and the world's Muslims.

The Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation in the World

Meanwhile, however, the Near East Delegation's interactions with ordinary people are more difficult to explain solely in terms of the war with Japan or Chinese Muslims' relations with the Chinese state. It is hard not to conclude that, in spite of themselves and their politics, they were simply happy to be where they were, meeting the *umma* face to face. The "commoners" across

the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia tended to treat the delegation members in a friendly and welcoming manner. For many, the war, which had not yet broken out in Europe or North Africa, was for the time being an afterthought. Correspondingly, the delegation did not in fact spend all of its hours and days abroad trying to convince them otherwise. Indeed, they seemed to discuss the conflict with Japan somewhat less as their journey wore on. Moreover, the journalists, students, workers, and several non-Muslim expatriates they encountered, either through planned, semi-planned, or unplanned meetings, tended to view them as representatives of the very same Islamic and Easternist solidarities they thought they were instrumentalizing.

Despite his fervent anti-Japanese positions, Ma Tianying kept an autograph book throughout the delegation's journey (and continued to do so when he led the South Seas Delegation) that attests to the diverse ways in which the delegation was received and perceived. Among his Chinese Muslim associates and admirers, Ma even went by the nickname "Mister Awaken-the-East" (*xingdong xiansheng*).[482] The earliest autographs came from the delegations' Chinese Muslim associates themselves. On the first page, Wang Jingzhai left Ma some elegant calligraphic exhortations that speak to the multiple moral and political levels on which the delegation operated: "Protect the nation and love the faith (*huguo aijiao*), do not lag behind others (*bu luo renhou*), make friends and stand up for righteousness (*jiaoyou zhong yi*), continue always seeking knowledge (*qiuzhi you heng*)." The first phrase alludes to the Hadith "Patriotism is an article of faith (*hubb al-watan min al-iman*), which Wang Jingzhai is credited with having translated into Chinese; the last echoes and inverts the (doubted) Hadith "Seeketh knowledge even unto China (*utlub al-'ilm walaw bi-l-Sin*)." Several significant figures were among those

[482] Digital copies of the autograph book's pages are available in Ma Tianying Papers, Centre for Malaysian Chinese Studies (Kuala Lumpur), Personal Collection, MTY.C4.1.

who signed the book and offered their well-wishes: Khalid Sheldrake, the famous British convert to Islam; the assistant to the private secretary of King ‘Abd al-‘Aziz; and the Chinese Azharites’ Arabic instructor, Muhammad al-Zifzaf, who had also met Ma Songting and Zhao Zhenwu in 1933.[483] Several Chinese Azharites also contributed Arabic and Chinese inscriptions. The words of anonymous strangers, however, were perhaps the most telling. Some focused on the war, while others viewed the delegation more in Islamic or anticolonial terms, or a mix of these. Abdul Rahman Siddiqi of Calcutta wrote in English, “If there are a dozen men like Ibrahim [Ma Tianying] in China, Japan will be drowned in the Pacific Ocean and China will become the leader of Asia and the whole world.”[484] An Indian named Ajit Mukherji wrote, also in English, “If China becomes really free from the foreign devils, India cannot long remain a slave.”[485] Meanwhile, a nurse named J. Thompson, stationed in Lahore, wrote in English expressing what could be subtle skepticism of the delegation’s propagandizing: “Wish you the best of luck in your Sino-Japanise [sic] War.”[486] Others still saw the delegation primarily in terms of Islamic unity and solidarity: with no mention of the war, Mohamed Massoud of Rod-el-Farag, Cairo, wrote in Arabic that “I thank God for the opportunity to have met these great leaders of the youth of China, [and hope] your delegation’s concerted efforts will result in the strengthening of relations between Chinese Muslims and the Muslims of Egypt and the Near East.”[487] In addition to collecting autographs, the delegation also bestowed gifts. For example, in an article on Chinese art published in the Egyptian cultural magazine *al-Risala* (see Chapter Five) in 1940,

[483] Ma Tianying Papers MTY.C4.1. C19380001.24, C19380001.49, C19380001.74.

[484] Ma Tianying Papers MTY.C4.1. C19380001.40.

[485] Ma Tianying Papers MTY.C4.1. C19380001.4.

[486] Ma Tianying Papers MTY.C4.1. C19380001.19.

[487] Ma Tianying Papers MTY.C4.1. C19380001.34.

Zaynab al-Hakim, daughter of the Egyptian poet Tawfiq al-Hakim (1898-1987), recalled receiving a magnificent Chinese (Muslim?) wood carving presented to her by the delegation.[488]

What actually happened during the Near East Delegation's journey? Quantitatively, they spent over a third of their time on the road, 165 of 436 days. The other 271 days were spent in meetings.[489] According to Mao, before departing from Hong Kong on 11 January 1938, they met with several Muslim leaders who had escaped Manchuria and the Japanese-occupied eastern cities.[490] They then spent six days in Vietnam, celebrating *jum'a* in Saigon, sampling Indian, Malaysian, and local food, and taking time to visit an Indian Buddhist temple as well as the zoo, all the while making passing observations about local overseas Chinese and the relationship between Chinese and Vietnamese "civilization."[491] Ma Tianying's knowledge of French may have proven useful in situations where Chinese did not suffice.

From Vietnam, the delegation proceeded to Singapore, arriving on 18 January. Although they stayed only for that day, they found time to meet with the founder and president of the All-Malaya Muslim Missionary Society, Maulana Muhammad Abdul Aleem Siddiqi al-Qadri, its vice-president, Syed Abubakar bin Taha Alsagoff, and its secretary "Moonshi."[492] They also

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[488] Zaynab al-Hakim, "al-Fannan [The Artists]," *al-Risala* 343, 29 January 1940, pp. 178-79. Al-Hakim wrote: "I remember a gift of Chinese art, a masterpiece of the imagination, presented to me by the Chinese Islamic Fraternal Delegation, which resided in Cairo in March and April of 1939 [1938]. The medium of the image was wood, carved in a floral design, depicting birds plunging into water, and three standing on the shore. Their varying characteristics drew my attention. One of them was covering its eyes, not wanting to see anyone or for anyone to see it; the second was suffering from terrible sadness, but remained standing; the third stood on one leg in some fatigue, lowering its wings to rest."

[489] The delegation's full itinerary appeared in its report, appended to the diary: *ZGHJJDFWTBG*, pp. 4-8.

[490] Mao, "Muslim Vision," p. 383.

[491] *ZGHJJDGWTRJ*, pp. 15-25 passim.

[492] These three men are identified in Chinese characters in the *ZGHJJDGWTRJ* as "Suidige," "Alesagufu," and "Mengshi," along with their titles, and the Romanizations "Alasaguf" and "Moonshi" for the latter two. They had been introduced to these individuals by a Mr. Sun, chairman of Hong Kong's Chinese Muslim Cultural and Fraternal Organization (*Zhonghua huijiao bo'ai she*), identified here as the *Xianggang bo'ai she*, the equivalent of *Jam'iyyat*

retained contact information for Hugh Milner of the *Straits Times*, as well as several of Singapore's Chinese-language publications.[493] While in Singapore, they picked up a copy of *Genuine Islam*, the English magazine of the All-Malaya Muslim Missionary Society.[494] Departing Singapore the following morning, Xue Wenbo recorded that they read the magazine while "gazing from a distance toward Sumatra, amidst scattered clouds and waveless glass-like seas." They were surprised to find that contained a good deal of commentary on Islam in China, not all of which was entirely favorable, such as "China's Muslims may number as many as fifty or sixty million, but they have not yet been particularly successful in spreading the faith in their country." Xue followed this with a long entry strongly implying that the comment was

al-rahma in Arabic, though it is unclear whether the organization used an Arabic title. The organization, the largest of its kind in Hong Kong, was founded in 1917 and still exists today at Chan Tong Lane, 7, Wan Chai: http://www.cmcfa.com/. The Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation would also meet with Alsagoff and Moonshi upon their arrival in Singapore in December 1939.

Maulana Muhammad Abdul Aleem Siddiqi al-Qadri (1892-1954) was an Indian-born Muslim claiming descent from Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, the first Caliph of Islam. He was an accomplished and revered Islamic scholar who had studied with the Sufi master Maulana Ahmad Raza Khan (1856-1921), founder of India's Barelvi Movement. He eventually traveled to forty countries across Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and the Americas, including China. He arrived in Singapore in 1930 and established the All-Malaya Muslim Missionary Society (now known as Jamiya Singapore) in 1932. He is buried at the Jannatul Baqqi in Medina. "Maulana Abdul Aleem Siddique": http://www.aleemsiddique.org.sg/index.php?/Info/maulana-abdul-aleem-siddique.html.

Syed Abubakar bin Taha Alsagoff (1882-1956), born in Hadramawt, Yemen, studied in Mecca, but moved to Singapore to conduct *da'wa* in 1927. He served as the first headmaster of the recently formed Madrasah Aljunied on Victoria Street, sponsored by another prominent Singaporean Hadrami family, from then until 1955. See Syed Muhd Khairudin Aljunied, "The Role of Hadramis in Post-Second World War Singapore—A Reinterpretation," *Immigrants and Minorities* 25/2 (2007): 163-83.

"Moonshi" is (in all likelihood) Dr. Hafeezudin Sirajuddin Moonshi bin Hakeem Abdul Hamid (1895-1965). Born Surat, Bombay, India; came to Singapore in early childhood. Studied at Raffles Institution before enrolling for medicine. Graduated from King Edward VII College of Medicine in Singapore in 1916. Entered private practice a month following graduation and was the first to operate a Muslim clinic in Singapore. See Faridah Abdul Rashid, *Biography of the Early Malay Doctors 1900-1957: Malaya and Singapore* (Xlibris, 2012), pp. 127-28 (e-book edition).

[493] *ZGHJJDGWTRJ*, pp. 35-36.

[494] Ibid., p. 37. Ma Jian and the Ma Tianying would both later publish English-language articles in *Genuine Islam*, the latter during the Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation.

wrongheaded and reminding readers that Muslims had refrained from proselytization throughout China's history.[495]

Finally, sailing northward through the Red Sea, the delegation at first proceeded to Suez to rendezvous with Da Pusheng, Sha Guozhen, and Wang Shiming. There they immediately changed steamers, boarding an Egyptian Hajj vessel called the *Qasr* bound for Jidda. They timed their journey to coincide with the month of the Hajj, departing Suez for Jidda on 3 February 1938 (3 Dhul Hijjah 1356) and arriving two days later.[496]

Meanwhile, the GMD Ministry of Foreign Affairs had not bothered to inform Qiu Zuming, its consul-general in Cairo, of the delegation's itinerary or the nature of its mission; Qiu cabled the ministry on 8 February 1938, by which time the delegation was already in Mecca, saying "Received message Near East Delegation coming, head Wang Zengshan, members Zhang Zhaoli, Xue Wenbo, Ma Tianying. Have not yet received orders regarding this delegation. Have not yet received communication from them on whereabouts. Please telegram at earliest convenience and specify if this is a governmental delegation or a private one." Trusted by the GMD government to the point of neglect, the delegation was acting very much on its own.[497]

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[495] *ZGHJJDGWTRJ*, pp. 36-39. Before proceeding to the Hijaz, the CINED made one more one-day stop, this time in Colombo, where scheduled a meeting at the Paris Hotel with Syed Raof Pasha of the local Indian Muslim Association. *ZGHJJDGWTRJ*, pp. 50-54.

[496] *ZGHJJDGWTRJ*, pp. 82-83.

[497] An additional explanation for the GMD's lack of coordination may have been a suspicion that their Cairo consulate was unreliable. On 20 February 1939, the GMD Central Executive Committee (*zhongyang zhixing weiyuanhui*) had ordered two Muslim agents in the Middle East, Isa Yusuf Alptekin (1901-95; Ch. *Aisha*), the former general secretary of the national assembly of the East Turkistan Republic (1933-34) now serving the GMD government, and Ma Fuliang (see below), to investigate and report on corruption in their Turkish embassy and Cairo consulate. To be clear: the GMD Executive Yuan was using Muslim spies to report on non-Muslim consular officials abroad; in Īsa's case, this was perhaps a test of loyalty as much as a fact-finding mission. Pan Zhiping, "'Dong Tu' de 'sanwei xiansheng' yu guomin zhengfu [The 'East Turkistan Three' and the GMD Government]," *Shixue jikan* (May 2016): http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_6d558a460102wo7p.html.

Isa and Ma sent their report to the Central Executive Committee from Cairo on 30 August 1939. They attached copies of letters written in French between consul-general Qiu Zuming and Moïse Lévy de Benzion (1873-1943), the Alexandrian-born Sephardic Jew and Cairo department store owner whose large art collection was

In another sense, of course, the delegation members were not alone at all, but finally "reunited" with the world's Muslims. Their experience aboard the *Qasr* raises the question of how they perceived other Muslims during their travels. Xue Wenbo's comments in the diary mix racial and class prejudice with attempts to avoid such prejudice. Xue was evidently struck by differences in dress and physical appearance: unlike Da, Ma, Wang Zengshan, or Wang Shiming, he and Zhang had probably never met Arabs, Africans, or Indians before this point. Xue remarked awkwardly that "All Muslims are brothers; [therefore] the passengers do not see the [African] ship attendants as servants." He later affirmed that "Everyone on this ship was Muslim, and an Islamic spirit of equality (*Yisilan pingdeng jingshen*) prevailed," adding once more that "No one would dare see the attendants as servants (*ren bu gan yi nupu shi zhi ye*)."[498] One wonders how the ship attendants might have responded to such statements if given the opportunity.

As for how Da, Sha, and the delegation members were perceived and treated by their fellow Muslims, Xue's diary entries are consistently positive. They passed their time aboard the *Qasr* partly in conversation, and partly listening to Egyptian music broadcast over the ship's loudspeakers, which Xue found "sweet and agreeable." People also made their own music, with "trumpeters and drummers playing when the time came to board the ship."[499] The Hajjis aboard

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plundered by the Nazis. De Benzion had been renting Qiu a (presumably luxurious) apartment at 6 Rue Kasr el Nil (Shari' Qasr al-Nil) in downtown Cairo, apparently without the Chinese government's approval.

Significantly, the same order from the Central Executive Committee instructed Īsa and Ma to investigate "the feelings toward our country's war of resistance among Istanbul's Xinjiang exiles and communal schools."

Academia Sinica Modern History Archive (Taipei), Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00005. The same file indicates that GMD diplomatic coordination was better with the countries of Southeast Asia during the Chinese Islamic South Seas Delegation.

[498] *ZGHJJDGWTRJ*, pp. 70, 74.

[499] Ibid., p. 74.

the *Qasr* were mostly Egyptian, including seventy-eight from the Egyptian University (i.e. Cairo University) and thirty-four from al-Azhar. Xue Wenbo noted that they "expressed the utmost sympathy for our delegation's mission" (*ji biao tongqing*). Interacting with the Egyptian students, Xue recalled Ma Songting telling him: "The young people of Egypt are well-endowed with both national and religious consciousness."[500] Regardless of what else may have actually transpired aboard the ship, Xue's recordings contained implicit lessons for both Chinese society—that Muslims abroad treated Chinese Muslims as equals to a greater extent than non-Muslim Chinese in China did—and for China's Muslims themselves—that they should emulate the Egyptians and strive to be both better Muslims and better citizens of China.

The delegation members' experiences aboard the *Qasr* were not limited to shocks of unfamiliarity or shocks of recognition. Rather, their interactions during these two days on the Red Sea offered opportunities for serious discussions of the fate of Islam in China and the Islamic world as a whole. As it happens, an Egyptian University student named Hassan was also aboard, introduced to the delegation by Ma Jian, the Chinese Azharite from Yunnan (see Chapter Five). On 4 February, Hassan in turn introduced Da Pusheng and the delegation to his group leader, who was none other than the Egyptian intellectual Ahmad Amin (1886-1954).[501] Xue recalled: "Sitting in the midst of a crowd with an extremely serene expression, wearing glasses and a red cap," Amin was escorting the Egyptian University Hajj delegation, along with another lesser-known Egyptian University historian named 'Abdul Wahhab al-Tujairi.[502] Amin invited the Chinese Muslims to sit and inquired about their mission. Xue noticed that Amin already

[500] Ibid., p. 72.

[501] Ahmad Amin, *Hayati*, pp. 257-70 describes Amin's Hajj with the Egyptian University group, which he recalls as occurring in 1937 (perhaps a separate trip, or perhaps a misprint). He does not mention many details of the journey, but he recalled the experience in positive terms.

[502] *ZGHJJDGWTRJ*, p. 75.

knew a considerable amount about Islam in China. Amin remarked: "I have heard that there are fifty million Muslims in China. This is excellent. They will have a great role to play in the new dynamism we see in China. Yet some of China's Muslims still feel that this will not be the case? How could that be?" According to Xue, he and his colleagues took the opportunity to reinforce their standard account of Islam in China and its modern predicament. In the past, they said, China's Muslims "faced certain restrictions," and thus remained weak and culturally underdeveloped. But today,

> with their belief in Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People, the position of the Chinese Muslim nationality (*Huimin zhi minzu*) approaches equality, and has left its former conservatism behind for the path of progress. What they need most now is to seek knowledge. Seeking knowledge in turn consists of two components: a domestic (*guonei*) component of improving Muslim education, and an international (*guoji*) one of connecting with the world's Muslims…Muslims [outside China] care deeply about their religion. We have exchanged periodicals with them, and sent students abroad [to study with them], and invited [their] instructors to come to China, and collected books [from them], progressing in leaps and bounds. But even after all this work, after the many efforts we have made for our country, the Muslims of China remain ungrateful to us.[503]

Listening to all of this, Professor al-Tujairi challenged them: "The general consensus today is that the world's Muslim nations must form a great alliance, pursuing self-preservation internally and resisting imperialism externally. But I am not satisfied with this thinking. In what specific sense can such unity be achieved? What say the Muslim leaders in your venerable homeland?" Da Pusheng responded:

> Islam's emphasis on unity expresses itself most clearly on the social level. A great distance separates what might be possible in theory from what is achieved in fact. There are only two forms an alliance [of Muslims] could take. One is establishing a Caliphate. But after the Caliphate was abolished, Muslims lost heart, and could only gaze from afar at their fellow Muslims elsewhere, without a means of returning to their former condition. The other is to form a representative

[503] Ibid., p. 76.

> institution, with committees from each Muslim country and Muslim region…This latter form of unity could indeed be more effective.[504]

We cannot know if this is exactly what was said, or what else may have been said. All we know is that Xue recorded for his Chinese readers, the GMD and Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation, that the delegation dutifully communicated, in the presence of an Egyptian Muslim intellectual luminary, the position of China's Muslim leaders that only "social" and associational unity, but not political unity, would be possible between the world's Muslims going forward.

Regardless of these potential differences of opinion over the question of Islamic unity, Ahmad Amin, perhaps moved by his face-to-face interaction with the Near East Delegation, published Sha Guozhen's anti-Japanese propaganda letter "to the Muslims of the world" in *al-Risala* (1933-), a major Cairo-based Islamic journal he edited, three months later. In the letter, Sha referred to Japan as the "younger sister of China" that had borrowed Chinese culture, and as a colonialist and imperialist power in contrast to the naturally peace-loving Chinese.[505]

Reaching the Hijaz, the delegation completed their Hajj on 6-10 February 1938. Before the end of the second day, they paid a visit to the offices of the influential journal *Umm al-Qura*.[506] Before disembarking, however, they encountered a small group "flat-faced men, not resembling Near Easterners," who appeared "not yet accustomed to the steps of prayer." Conferring with Sha Guozhen, who had handled the passport applications for the Chinese Azharites, the delegation concluded that these could not be Chinese, but were "suspicious Japanese vagrants" (*keyi zhi riben langren*) posing as Muslims. Listening in on their

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[504] Ibid.

[505] Muhammad Ibrahim Shah Kwujin [a.k.a. Sha Guozhen], "Risalat muslimi al-Sin ila muslimi al-'alam 'an haqa'iq al-harb al-siniyya al-yabaniyya al-qa'ima [A Letter from the Muslims of China to the Muslims of the World on the Facts of the Present Sino-Japanese War]," *al-Risala*, 23 May 1938, p. 870-71.

[506] *Umm al-Qura* gave some coverage to Islam and Muslims in China, which I have not yet had time to explore in depth.

conversations, they identified one as Mohamet Salih Suzuki. While another claimed to be from Manchukuo, Xue stressed in the diary entry that "These men must be from Japan. It is doubtful that they were Chinese traitors (*hanjian*)."[507]

The ritual stations of the Hajj itself were apparently exempted from the delegation's anti-Japanese propaganda, but the periods of rest in between were not, nor were the days following completion of the Hajj. Their encounters with Gansu, Russian, and Uyghur Muslims at Mecca demonstrate clearly how the delegation's anti-Japanese propaganda intersected with preexisting GMD and elite Muslim interests toward Northwest frontiers (see Chapter Two). On 8 February, prior to setting out for Mount Arafat, a group of Muslim "coreligionists" (*jiaobao*) from Gansu Province visited the delegation at the Chinese Hajjis' sleeping quarters. Xue wrote that these Gansu Muslims had "been poisoned by Japanese propaganda in Arabia, to the effect that Islam represented a separate nation-state [from China]."[508] The delegation was apparently unable to convince them otherwise. Xue noted that these Muslims had faced considerable hardship, and acted like a "slavish conquered people" (*wang guo nu*). He wrote in the diary that the encounter made him "resolve to serve my country upon returning from the Hajj," and conclude that he must "further develop my abilities to carry out the War of Resistance."[509]

Similarly, on 15 February, the delegation encountered a group of "countryless Tatar exiles from Russia" (*E'guo Tata'er zhi liuwangzhe*) led by Musa Jarullah.[510] These men wondered if China's alliance with the Soviet Union would be detrimental to Islam. According to

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[507] *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, pp. 79-81.

[508] Ibid., p. 93.

[509] Ibid.

[510] *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, p. 103.

Xue, the delegation replied that China followed the Three Principles of the People, not Communism, and that the GMD's alliances with the CCP and the Soviet Union were due to wartime exigencies. They asked rhetorically: "When it was first founded, Turkey signed an agreement with Russia, but has Turkey since become Communist?"[511]

Finally, as Yufeng Mao notes, Wang Zengshan used part of the delegation's time to meet with and attempt to influence Uyghur expatriates in the Hijaz. In this meeting, Wang impressed upon the Uyghurs that the GMD government would treat them better than any other power and allow them autonomy (*minzhi zhuyi*). Unconvinced, the Uyghurs produced a Japanese journal showing the flags of Japan, Italy, and Germany, as well as a logo featuring a sun and moon, together representing opposition to Communism and Japan's friendship with the Islamic world. They argued that the Axis would be a better protector for Muslims. They argued with Wang Shiming in Arabic, and perhaps in modified Turkish with Wang. Ma Tianying eventually rose from his chair and argued (it is unclear in what language) that Japan was an imperialist country and no friend to Muslims, and that any appearance of friendship was only part of its larger imperial plot. Pointing to an image of a Japanaese airplane on the cover of the journal, Ma asked how many of their fellow Muslims had been killed in Shanghai and Nanjing by such machines. The parties apparently did not reach a resolution; Xue closed the entry stating that the conversation went on for quite some time before they all finally parted ways.[512]

In the meantime, the delegation had its first audience with King ʻAbd al-ʻAziz on 11 February, but this turned out to be only a perfunctory exchange of greetings. The king "inquired

[511] Ibid. Yufeng Mao relates an additional story of this encounter in which a Uyghur named Muhammad Sulita showed the Near East Delegation Japanese propaganda materials toward Muslims featuring the "flags of Japan, Italy, and Germany, as well as a logo containing a sun and moon" representing Japan and the Islamic world. This Muhammad Sulita "argued that the anti-communist alliance formed by Japan, Italy, and Germany represented the true hope for Muslims living in Chinese territories."

[512] *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, pp. 109-13. Most entries in the diary did not approach this length.

little about the situation of Islam in China," Xue noted.[513] Some days later, Xue encountered a man who told him about the 'Abd al-'Aziz's "destruction of ancient relics," which Xue thought was a "wicked idea that neglected and would embitter the people, and harm belief" (*gou tong renmin zhi xienian er shang xinyang*).[514] Then, on 21 February, the delegation received a second chance at an audience with the king. Wang Shiming delivered a "*salam* on behalf of all the Muslim organizations of China" and wished the king success in his "national movement." After listening to Wang describe China's war with Japan and its significance for Chinese Muslims, the king remarked that all Muslims are brothers, and he extended his sympathy, "for we live in vile and nasty times."[515]

Soon it was time to move on. The delegation again boarded a steamer for Suez. This time, they continued on to Cairo, arriving on 10 March. On their third day, they met with the leaders of the Young Men's Muslim Association (*Jam'iyyat al-shaban al-muslimin*, founded 1926), noting that Ma Songting had joined the organization during one of his visits to Egypt.[516] Eleven days later, on 23 March, the sixth contingent of aspiring Chinese Muslim *ulama* (known as the "Farouq delegation" due to the Egyptian king's personal sponsorship) arrived in Cairo to commence their studies at al-Azhar. Xue noticed that their leader, Imam Pang Shiqian (see Chapters One, Five, and Six), "wore a round skullcap and a long robe covered by a short jacket, exactly the same as he would back in China, and bore a refined scholarly expression."[517]

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[513] Ibid., p. 99.

[514] Ibid., pp. 108-09.

[515] Ibid., p. 127.

[516] Ibid., p. 163.

[517] Ibid., pp. 209-11.

The Near East Delegation had already been meeting with several Azhar sheikhs in the preceding weeks, and found that their views varied widely. On 13 March, they called upon Sheikh Muhammad Ma'mun al-Shanawi (1878-1950), head of the Faculty of Law (*Kulliyyat al-shari'a*), who did not have much to say about the war, but told them that Christianity was an imperialist religion and that Muslims would fall prey to its cultural invasion if they did not hold fast to their beliefs. Similarly, the head of the Faculty of Theology (*Kulliyyat usul al-din*), whom Xue described only as "fat," told them that the Japanese menace to China could not be greater than the imperialist menace to the "weak nations" of the world. When the topic shifted to the purpose of theology—which Chinese Muslims at the time rendered as *zhexue*, usually the equivalent of "philosophy"—Ma Tianying interjected that "Japan's only *zhexue* was killing."[518] The delegation found Sheikh Ibrahim al-Jibali, deputy director of the Faculty of Theology and a mentor to Ma Jian (see Chapter Five), a more receptive audience. Curiously, Xue noticed that "two thirds of the photos in al-Jibali's office were of Chinese people"; the sheikh himself stated that the Chinese were the best of his foreign friends. He advised the delegation to promote Arabic education among Chinese Muslims, for then they could understand the religion correctly and connect better with their fellow Muslims. As for the war, according to Xue, al-Jibali "was greatly concerned about it, and prayed to God that China's hardship would soon be lifted, and that it would eventually achieve victory."[519] That same day, they also met with Sheikh Muhammad al-Khidr Hussein, also of the Faculty of Theology, who displayed a similar concern

[518] Ibid., pp. 165-66; Sheikh Muhammad Ma'mun al-Shanawi is identified in the diary as *Maimeng* in Chinese characters, Romanized as "Memun."

[519] Ibid., pp. 167-69; Benite, "Taking 'Abduh to China."

for Chinese Muslim education and associations, though he had less to say abou the war than al-Jibali.[520]

The delegation remained in Egypt for sixty-six days, the longest of any Middle Eastern country. They took time between meetings to visit the *Qal'a* of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha, the Opera House, the Pyramids, the City of the Dead, the Hussein Mosque, and several other sites. They also attended several tea parties: one hosted by Timur Bey, at which they met Taha Hussein; another at which an unnamed Egyptian poet composed a poem in their honor, translated by Ma Jian; another by the Egyptian Feminist Union (*al-Ittihad al-nisa'i al-misri*, established 1923), attended by associates of Huda Sha'rawi (but apparently not Sha'rawi herself); and yet another at which they met the Azhar scholar Mustafa 'Abd al-Raziq, who told them he was "quite familiar" with Wang Jingzhai and Ma Songting.[521] On 6 April, they also met with representatives of the Muslim Brotherhood, though it appears Hassan al-Banna was not in attendance (Xue noted, however, that the Farouq delegation of Chinese Azharites had also been invited).[522] Cairo had begun to feel familiar by late spring 1938; Xue Wenbo wrote about "feeling reluctant to leave."[523]

The delegation did not disembark in Palestine, but merely stopped at the port in Jaffa before continuing directly to Beirut. By this point, Mandate Palestine was in its third year of revolt against the British Mandate. By August of that year, the British military commander wrote

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[520] *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, pp. 169-70.

[521] Ibid., pp. 194-98, 225-26, 242-44.

[522] Ibid., pp. 235-36.

[523] Ibid., pp. 259-60.

that "the situation was such that civil administration of the country was, to all practical purposes, non-existent."[524] Britain would further increase its military operations that fall.

On 21 May, in Beirut, the delegation met with Hajj Amin al-Husayni. Xue described the mufti as "clearly an international man of Islam," adding that he had been "forced into exile by imperialism…but was determined neither to surrender nor cooperate."[525] Xue's account of their interaction includes no overt discussion of the war; rather, al-Husayni tells them only that Islam has lost its former "all-encompassing power" despite Muslims' representing a fifth of the world's population. According to Xue, al-Husayni drew a distinction between doctrinal (*jiaoyi*) versus "actual" unity (*shidi lianluo*), saying that Muslims in the present times needed the latter. He also spoke approvingly of Chinese Muslims cooperation with non-Muslim Chinese, for, he said, Islam's mission was one directed at the entire world.[526]

The delegation spent a week each in Beirut, Damascus, and Baghdad, and two weeks in Iran. They traveled by air from Damascus to Baghdad, Baghdad to Tehran, and Tehran to Isfahan. Other than Hajj Amin al-Husayni, who had met with Ma Songting and Zhao Zhenwu in 1933, the delegation was not as thoroughly well-connected in the Levant, Iraq, and Iran as they were in Egypt. Nevertheless, they managed to meet with important figures and organizations here as well, including the president of Syria, Hashim al-Atassi, the Bureau Arabe, and the *Jam'iyyat al-hidaya al-islamiyya*. They also visited the tombs of Imam Hanafi and King Faisal.[527] The Iran portion of the trip was the most touristic, and required visas that had taken

[524] Report by General Robert Haining, 30 August 1938, cited in Rashid Khalidi, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood* (Boston: Beacon, 2006), p. 107; Lesch, *Arab Politics*, p. 223.

[525] *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, p. 288.

[526] Ibid., pp. 289-91.

[527] Ibid., pp. 300-01, 303-04, 319.

some time to process in Cairo.[528] From Isfahan, they traveled by air to Bushehr and by steamer from there to Bombay.

The delegation spent more time in British India (including parts of today's Pakistan) than any other single country, including Egypt. They stayed in Bombay, Lahore, Lucknow, Bathinda, and Calcutta, traveling all the while by rail. The length of time was partly due to their waiting for Turkish visas.[529] India was also potentially easier to navigate than the Middle East, however, because there the Chinese Muslims could speak English (Ma Tianying in particular). They held slightly more meetings per unit of time in India than in the Middle East, a discrepancy that grows if we consider the greater travel distances required in India.

The delegation's time in India offered an additional opportunity to make appeals to Uyghur expatriates. On 20 September, the delegation paid a visit to the Bombay Xinjiang Fellow Provincials Association (*Xinjiang tongxiang hui*), including an Imam Hamid, with whom they spoke at length about differences between Sunnis and Shia, as well as Indian Muslim groups that did not fall in these two categories.[530] In February 1940, this association would send four students—identified only as Muhammad Hassan, Abdul Khaliq, Nur Muhammad, and Sa'd—to study at al-Azhar. They may have been acting on the delegation's recommendation, particularly that of Wang Zengshan, who again was deeply involved in Xinjiang's affairs and may have hoped that absorbing al-Azhar's Islamic modernism and interacting with the Chinese Azharites would help cultivate an integrationist disposition among educated Uyghurs.[531] Pang Shiqian

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[528] Ibid., p. 258.

[529] Ibid., p. 464.

[530] Ibid., p. 452.

[531] This is informed speculation. Xue does not mention whether the possibility of study at al-Azhar was discussed in the face-to-face meeting. In general, however, it would have been unusual for Uyghurs to study at al-Azhar. Pang

recorded these students' presence in his memoir, referring to them and seven others as the Chinese Azharites' "Xinjiang classmates" (*Xinjiang tongxue*).[532]

The delegation attempted to call upon Muhammad Ali Jinnah, leader of the All-India Muslim League, on their second day in Bombay (3 July 1938) as well as their last (10 October), and hoped for a meeting in the interim.[533] Though guided by the Chinese consul-general Chen, they failed to meet him, though received multiple well-wishes from the League. This was the last reason for their long stay in India. The late 1930s, of course, saw a growing momentum on the part of the Pakistan movement. The 1937 Singh elections had confirmed for Jinnah that a single country with a political system based on equal representation could potentially exclude Indian Muslims from their own government. Furthermore, Muhammad Iqbal, whose categorical support for the Pakistan idea Jinnah had increasingly come to accept, had died on 21 April. It was a formative moment overall, but the timing did not favor the Chinese Muslims.

Although the non-Muslim Chinese press appears not to have paid significant attention to it, the Pakistan movement presented a potentially acute conceptual problem for China's integrationist Muslim elites. The Chinese Muslims had been aware of the situation of Indian Muslims for some time. In the 1920s, Shanghai-based Chinese Muslim publications contained particularly frequent coverage of Indian Muslim affairs. In the early 1930s, Hai Weiliang, a Chinese Muslim from Hunan who was studying at the Nadwat al-'Ulama in Lucknow (after

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does not mention the presence of any Xinjiang students at al-Azhar other than these. If there were others, however, they may have been identified as Turkish and included without differentiation in the Turkish dormitory (*riwaq*). Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, pp. 10-11. Al-Azhar's *riwaq* rosters from 1936 do not clearly identify any individuals as coming from Turkistan in either their Turkish *riwaq* or among those of "unclear origin" (*la jiha lahum*). Sijl khususi li-l-tullab al-ghuraba' ibtida'an min sanat 1354 al-dirasiyya (1936) [Detailed Roster of Foreign Students beginning in AY1354/1936]," Azhar Memory www.alazharmemory.eg.

[532] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 22. Pang recorded that in the Bombay group, all but Muhammad Hassan were from Hotan.

[533] *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, pp. 368, 465.

living attending Aligarh in Delhi, and before moving to Cairo to study at al-Azhar; see Chapter Five) published several articles in *Yuehua* and elsewhere translating and analyzing Iqbal's 1930 "Allahabad Address," credited with inspiring the idea of Pakistan.[534] As Hai made clear, Indian Muslim leaders were in the process of reaching the diametrically opposite conclusion from China's Muslim leaders: that Muslims could not live alongside non-Muslims in a large nation-state that was representative in theory but majoritarian in practice.[535] Some of Hai's writings in *Al-Fath* and *al-Jami'a al-islamiyya* indicate that he would have favored such a fate for China's Muslims, particularly at the moment when the First East Turkistan Repubic gained independence (1933-34). For its part, however, the GMD government may have felt sufficiently assured that China's Muslims would not rise up against the state as they had in the nineteenth century. Indeed, such a feeling of assurance was a basis for the GMD's deputizing Chinese Muslims and instrumentalizing Islam in order to appeal to Indian Muslims, even as they did the same with Chinese Buddhists toward Indian and Southeast Asian Buddhists. In the 1930s and 1940s, this multi-pronged, "civilizational" approach appeared more sound to the GMD than simply dealing with India as a "Hindu" nation.

The delegation departed Bombay aboard the steamer S.S. *Conte Verde*—which, when traveling in the opposite direction, was transporting Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria to Shanghai. These efforts would increase dramatically after *Kristallnacht* (9-10 November 1938), which occurred two weeks after the delegation returned to the Middle East.[536] At Suez, they transferred to the Bulgarian cargo ship S.S. *Varna*, which would be torpedoed in 1941.

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[534] Chen, "Islam's Loneliest Cosmopolitan."

[535] Neither Tansen Sen, *India, China, and the World*, nor Brian Tsui, "China's Forgotten Revolution," provides an extensive discussion of the significance of the Pakistan movement for Sino-Indian relations.

The last major stop was Turkey. The delegation visited Istanbul and Ankara from mid-October to late November 1938. On 24 October, their first day in Istanbul, they met Abdul Aziz, a "Xinjiang man with a firm concept of nationalism." Learned in Turkish, Persian, and Arabic, Abdul Aziz was a supervisor of Xinjiang students studying abroad in Istanbul. The following day, they paid a visit to Istanbul University (which had become a state school, then known as the *İstanbul Darülfünûnu*, in 1924, when Wang Zengshan was a student there).[537] On 10 November, the delegation's last day in Istanbul, they received word that Mustafa Kemal had died of illness. Maintaining the group's curious refusal to see Ataturk as a secularizing or Westernizing figure, Xue Wenbo declared this a "great loss for the Islamic nations and the East."[538]

The delegation made a brief sightseeing detour to Greece. On 20 November, they boarded a steamer to return to Egypt. "Many of the passengers are Jewish," Xue wrote, "perhaps two-thirds." It was now ten days after *Kristallnacht*. He added: "They are bound for Palestine. The conflict between Arabs and Jews there unfolds rapidly. They are leaving a perilous place for a chaotic one. There is no inherent conflict between Arabs and Jews in nationality or religion, but imperialism favors the Jews economically and exploits the Arabs. Now it causes them to kill one another incessantly. In the end, how many victims will there be?"[539]

Dueling Delegations? The Japanese- and GMD-Sponsored Hajj Missions

[536] The S.S. *Conte Verde* was one of four ships operating on Lloyd Triestino's Far East Line from 1932, running between Trieste and Shanghai via Suez, Bombay, Colombo, Singapore, and Hong Kong, in twenty-four days. Triestino's ships brought 17,000 Jews from Germany and Austria to Shanghai from 1938 until Italy joined the war on 10 June 1940, resulting in the closure of the line. Scuttled by its Italian crew in Shanghai in 1943, the Japanese used it for a time until it was scrapped in 1949. Elizabethe W. Cope, "Displaced Europeans in Shanghai," *Far Eastern Survey* 17/23 (8 December 1948): pp. 274-276; James R. Ross, Escape to Shanghai: A Jewish Community in China (New York: Free Press, 1994), pp. 42-50; David H. Kranzler, "The history of the Jewish refugee community of Shanghai 1938-1945," (PhD dissertation, Yeshiva University, 1971).

[537] *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, pp. 481-83.

[538] Ibid., p. 500.

[539] Ibid., p. 515.

The Japanese Empire had been following news of the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation. In response, it organized its own delegation in December 1938, as the Near East Delegation was en route back to China. The Japanese military had formed a Chinese General Islamic Association in Manchuria in July 1937, which sponsored the so-called 1939 "North China Hajj Delegation" (*Huabei chaojin tuan*).[540] Led by the Chinese Muslim Tang Yichen, this delegation's purpose was to undo the work of the GMD-sponsored Near East Delegation by swaying Middle Eastern opinion in Japan's favor and demonstrating that Muslims in Japanese-controlled territories were living in peace and security.[541] As Kelly Hammond explains, however, Tang was a businessman from an old and established Muslim family of Beijing, and material interests rather than ideology informed his collaboration with the Japanese Empire.[542] Though willing to defend the Japanese to a point, he was also sensitive to criticism of his complicity, and eagerly asserted that his Hajj delegation was religious and not political.

From the beginning, the GMD-affiliated Chinese Muslim elites naturally regarded Tang's Japanese-sponsored delegation as politically motivated. In early January 1939, Sun Shengwu—a Chinese Muslim official in the Executive Yuan, member of the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission, head of Beijing's "Northwest Public School" (*Xibei gongxue*), and co-managing

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[540] Kelly Hammond provides an excellent analysis of the implications of the term *Huabei*: "Tang's choice of the word Huabei (華北) to describe the region under Japanese occupation is an interesting one: much less loaded than Manchukuo (C. Manzhouguo 滿洲國), the term was familiar, innocuous, and also vague. Although Beiping was not in Manchukuo, it was still under Japanese occupation and his choice of the word "Huabei" evokes shared cultural rather than divisive political geography and indicates that he was completely aware of the political sensitivity among his intended readers with regard to the puppet state of occupied China and Manchukuo. By using the word "Huabei" Tang skirts this politically sensitive topic, while providing his readers with a clearly defined and historically familiar geographical entity that essentially corresponded with the area being occupied by the Japanese. These tensions and vocabulary choices highlight that Tang's hajj account was not a real-time journal but a reedited, apologia in response to the criticism Tang received following his return."

[541] Mao, "Muslim Vision," pp. 385-86.

[542] Hammond, "Conundrum of Collaboration," pp. 194-96.

director of the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation (see Chapter Two)—learned of Tang Yichen's Japanese delegation and began working to thwart it. On 5 January, he wrote to the Executive Yuan asking to form a counter-delegation. The following day, Executive Yuan Secretary Wei Daoming recommended using the Chinese Muslim students in Egypt, noting "Chiang says 'Permission granted. Please proceed.'" On Sun's advice, the GMD minister of finance Kong Xiangxi cabled the Cairo consulate to secure 500 British pounds in funding. Sun also somehow managed to contact Imam Ha Decheng, who had remained in occupied Shanghai due to his old age, asking him to do whatever he could to delay Tang Yichen's delegation, which was due to depart from there. Ha made contact with Tang and his delegation and apparently treated them hospitably, offering to act as their guide. Tang's account of these events states that Ha tried to help them obtain visas to Egypt through the British Consulate, but that the consular officials refused them; Sun Shengwu's version states that Ha himself persuaded the British not to grant the visas.[543] They eventually gained steamer passage out of Shanghai, but were forced to travel via Ethiopia.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contacted consul-general Qiu Zuming in Cairo, noting that Tang Yichen's delegation was traveling aboard the *Conte Rosso*.[544] They described the Japanese-sponsored delegation as "puppets" (*weilei*).[545] At the same time, Sun

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[543] Mao, "Muslim Vision," p. 386; Hammond, "Conundrum of Collaboration," p. 209. Mao cites Sun Shengwu, *Huijiao luncong* [*Essays on Islam*] (Taipei: Zhonghua wenhua chuban shiyeshe, 1963), p. 321; Hammond cites Tang Yichen, Maijia xunli ji [*Record of Meetings and Rituals in Mecca*] (Beiping: Zhongguo huijiao zonglianhehui, 1943). Noriko Yamazaki, "Chūni sensō-ki no chūgoku musurimu shiyakukai ni okeri `shin'nichiha' musurimu ni kansuru - kōsatsu – chūgoku kaikyō gōkai no Tang Yichen o chūshin ni," *Monthly Journal of Chinese Affairs* 65/9 (2011): p. 8.

[544] From the same steamer company as the *Conte Verde* used earlier by the Near East Delegation.

[545] By contrast, Pang Shiqian did not use the term "puppets" in his report to the GMD Ministry of Foreign Affairs or in his memoir of the delegation written after the fact, though he did refer to them as "the representatives of the illegitimate government" (*wei zhengfu pai de daibiao*). "Huijiao chaojin tuan [The [Chinese] Islamic Hajj

Shengwu, Tang Kesan, Da Pusheng, and Ma Songting wrote to Pang Shiqian and Ma Jian, relaying the Executive Yuan's instructions to form a Chinese Azharite Hajj delegation to intercept and counter the Japanese-sponsored one.[546] The next five days were spent purchasing steamer tickets, preparing passports, and being vaccinated against smallpox and other diseases.[547] On 23 January, twenty-eight Chinese Azharites boarded an Egyptian Hajj vessel, the *Zamzam*, to Jidda. The Chinese Azharites carried two flags, one the Republic of China, the other a "delegation flag" featuring the phrase "Chinese Islamic Hajj Delegation" in Chinese and Arabic (*Zhongguo huijiao chaojintuan* / *Firqat al-hajj al-siniyya*), written in white letters on a green background. Pang noted that Egyptians who saw them approved of the flag—"'*Ma sha' Allah!*,' many shouted"—and expressed their "sympathy and hopes" for the delegation. On 24 January, aboard ship, the Chinese Azharites "shared a prayer for Chinese Islam and China's war of resistance" with the Egyptian Azhar students and the three Azhar sheikhs accompanying them.[548]

The Chinese Azharites' Hajj experience was full of contradictions. They were quite literally prosecuting the war by day, and affirming Islam's peacefulness by night. On the

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Delegation] (January 1939)," Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, 11-WAA-00049; Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, pp. 119-40 passim.

[546] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00049. In his account of the Hajj delegation, Pang Shiqian wrote that he received a telegram from Sun, Tang, Da, and Ma on 18 February, but the government documents show that it must have been 18 January. Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 119.

[547] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 120.

[548] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00049; Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, pp. 120-22 (preparations; flags), 124 (group prayer); Mao, "Muslim Vision," p. 387.

Before departing, an individual Pang identifies only as "Fa-suo-cai, the Hijazi consul in Cairo" (the Saudis had ruled the Hijaz for over a decade by this point, so the modifier is an unusual one) assisted them. Pang says only he and Ma Jian were permitted to meet with the consul, and gives the impression of a somewhat awkward interaction. Pang recalls telling him: "The Muslims of China have always shown great concern and respect for the Hijazi royal family, as well as respect for your office, because his highness is the central figure of the Islamic world. When the Muslims of China come to Mecca each year to perform the Hajj, they are always very well treated in your estimable country." The consul said there was no need to be polite, that it was his job to assist Hajjis. Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, pp. 120-21.

morning of January 25, the delegation wrote a letter to the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation informing them of their itinerary. Yet in the evening, as the *Zamzam* approached land and the group donned their white *ihram* attire, Pang remarked "Islam is great and vast enough to turn all classes equals and make peoples of different languages and customs into one."[549]

IMAGE 2: The GMD-sponsored group at Suez. Source: Academia Sinica Modern History Archives (Taipei).

The GMD government in fact sent a second team of Muslims to Mecca, which meant multiple streams of intelligence, and thus a form of insurance against any conflicts of loyalty this mission might cause. When the Chinese Azharite delegation arrived in Mecca on 27 January, they were joined by two GMD Muslim agents who had been sent abroad in October 1938 to investigate corruption at the GMD's Turkey embassy and Cairo consulate (see above), as well as to assist with the GMD's anti-Japanese efforts abroad. The first agent was Īsa Yūsuf Alptekin (Ch. *Aisha*)—again, the former leader of the East Turkistan Republic (1933-34), but now a member of the GMD Judicial Yuan and the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation.

[549] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 125.

Alptekin had come to know Wang Zengshan in the early 1930s, when Wang was recruiting Uyghurs to study in Nanjing and develop pro-government, Islamic modernist periodicals analogous to those of the coastal Chinese Muslim modernist elites. The second agent was Ma Fuliang, a Chinese Muslim scholar, about whom less is known.[550] The two men were abroad until March 1940, when they returned to Chongqing after visiting Mumbai, Calcutta, Cairo, Mecca, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Afghanistan, and Burma. [551] The Chinese Azharite delegation appears to have been on entirely friendly and cooperative terms with Alptekin and Ma, but the potential for each side to inform on the other cannot have been lost on any of them.

The Chinese Azharite delegation's performative nature is clear from the briefing it provided the GMD government on 12 March. In the report, Pang Shiqian and Ma Jian wrote to the GMD Ministry of Foreign Affairs that after conferring with Isa Alptekin and Ma Fuliang on 27 January, they decided to join forces with a group of Hajjis from northwestern China (*Xibei jiaobao chaojinzhe*), bringing the Chinese Hajj group's total number to over one hundred. "Acting as one," Pang and Ma said, "we were able to make a more forceful impression (*yiqi yi zhuang shengshi*)."[552] Given the efforts of the Chinese Muslim elites to integrate northwestern frontier Muslims into China, and given that Japan had made inroads among certain Muslims there, it was an extremely important symbolic statement of Chinese Muslims' unity (at least to the GMD government and Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation) for the predominantly

[550] Pan states that Ma Fuliang was born in Xinjiang, whereas Hammond says he was from Beijing. The latter appears correct given Hammond's clarification that Ma and Tang Yichen recalled common acquaintances in Beijing and shared a fondness for the city's foods.

[551] Pang Shiqian and Ma Jian to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Huijiao chaojin tuan [The [Chinese] Islamic Hajj Delegation] (January 1939)," Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, 11-WAA-00049; Second Historical Archives of China (Nanjing), 五 (2) – 130; Pan, "'Dong Tu' de 'sanwei xiansheng.'"

[552] Pang and Ma, "Huijiao chaojin tuan."

coastal Chinese Azharites and the northwestern Hajjis to confront the Japanese-sponsored delegation as one—whether that is what actually happened or not.[553]

Relatedly, although their mission was ostensibly to conduct anti-Japanese propaganda and spy on Tang Yichen's Japanese-sponsored Hajj delegation, it appears the Chinese Azharites may have used some of their time in Mecca instead to make pro-GMD appeals to Xinjiang Muslims. Pang's memoir of the Hajj mission (only published in 1950 with *Aiji jiunian*, and therefore likely written in the mid- to late-1940s) recalls a meeting with several "Xinjiang coreligionists" (*Xinjiang jiaobao*) on 28 January. Pang says the Chinese Azharites and these Xinjiang Hajjis "discussed the problem of Islam in China at great length," adding that

> Islam in the interior [*neidi*] must be connected with Islam in Xinjiang. Their position was that to solve the problem of Xinjiang, it would be necessary to place great emphasis on educating the masses, as well as to reassure Xinjiang Muslims living in exile abroad…Xinjiang Muslims have no desire to scramble for power or profit, nor do they have political aspirations. What they hope for is only religious freedom and social stability. Should it not be easy to realize these aspirations, at the very least?[554]

This should not be considered a statement of support for Xinjiang's permanent integration into China. Writing in the late 1940s, during the Chinese Civil War, it would have been extremely dangerous for Pang to advocate anything other than Xinjiang's being part of China, regardless of whether it was the GMD or the CCP who eventually prevailed. Moreover, if any non-Muslims were hypothetically to read his book, he may even have been trying to protect Xinjiang from whoever ended up winning the civil war by reassuring Chinese-speaking audiences that Xinjiang had "no political aspirations." In any case, if the Chinese Azharites' encounter with the Xinjiang Hajjis indeed unfolded as Pang describes, then one could argue that the Chinese Azharites' were

[553] Pang and Ma, "Huijiao chaojin tuan," p. 50, Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection, 11-WAA-00049.

[554] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 129.

not only in Mecca to serve the GMD's anti-Japanese war aims, but also to serve its longer-term aspirations to dominate China's non-Han frontiers.

The GMD-sponsored Chinese Azharite delegation eventually did make contact with the Japanese-sponsored North China delegation. There is evidence that Pang and Ma exaggerated or embellished this aspect of their report as well. As Yufeng Mao has found, Pang and Ma reported that they successfully invited the Japanese-sponsored delegation to dinner on 28 January, at which time they were allegedly able to convince Tang Yichen and his associates that they had made a "huge mistake." The group supposedly swore "by their faith to never again serve Japan," but as Mao notes, the Japanese delegation continued to serve Japanese interests after returning to occupied Beijing.[555] Pang gave a different account in his memoir, however, saying only that "we all knew one another; we spoke for a long time of the news of our family and friends in Beiping, and of the situation of the enemy in North China. They told us they were only here to perform Hajj, and for no other purpose, for after all, they could not understand the [local] language."[556]

When placed directly side-by-side, Tang Yichen's memoir (published 1943), Ma and Pang's report to the GMD Ministry of Foreign Affairs (sent March 1939), and Pang's memoir (published 1950) allow for some corrective speculations, and also raise additional questions. Tang's account of his group's interactions with the GMD-sponsored Chinese Azharite Hajj delegation do not characterize those interactions in as confrontational, one-sided, or triumphalist a manner as Pang and Ma's report.[557] More than anything else, this reflects the relatively

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[555] Mao, "Muslim Vision, p. 387; Pang and Ma, "Huijiao chaojin tuan," p. 50, Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection, 11-WAA-00049.

[556] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 129.

[557] Hammond, "Conundrum of Collaoration," p. 196.

uncompromising ideological expectations of the GMD government, and the Chinese Azharites' sense that they needed to accommodate those expectations, even at the expense of "reality." Again, as for the men themselves, many knew each other, realized they knew of each other, or knew people in common. The two groups interacted on multiple occasions in Mecca and Jidda from late January to mid-February 1939. The overall impression is that this was a confusing experience for everyone involved, and perhaps a somewhat passive-aggressive one. Tang's account recalls multiple instances in which the Chinese Azharite group expressed sentiments of brotherhood and goodwill toward the Japanese-sponsored delegation, only to follow that up with sudden interrogations as to the "political" nature of the delegation—all while denying, until a relatively late point, that the GMD was sponsoring their own delegation and that they were reporting back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Chongqing.

Tang recounted one such frought interaction with Pang Shiqian and the GMD-sponsored group on the evening of 30 January 1939 (10 Dhul-hijjah 1357). This was the beginning of Eid al-Adha, the Festival of Sacrifice. Tang's account claims that his group shared their meal of roasted lamb with the GMD-sponsored group. Even this, however, became yet another occasion filled with dissonance: expressions of goodwill and affection alternating with interrogations about political motives.[558] Shortly after 8p.m., the moon had already risen high in the night sky, and Tang wanted to find a spot to enjoy the cool breeze. Tang says Pang accompanied him on his walk, and the two delegation leaders looked for a quiet place to sit. Tang wrote that he thought Pang merely wished to observe the moon, but "in fact he had some words he wanted to share":

> Imam Pang said: 'We have been good friends for many years. I will therefore speak candidly with you about a certain matter.'
>
> 'By all means, speak your mind,' I said.

[558] Tang, *Maijia xunli ji*; Hammond, "Conundrum of Collaboration," p. 227. Pang's description of this Eid in *Aiji jiunian* does not mention dinner with Tang's delegation. Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 131.

> Pang said: 'I have heard your group has come to Mecca on a mission. Is this true?'
>
> 'Indeed,' I said, 'Our mission is to fulfill the obligation of Hajj, one of Islam's Five Pillars.'
>
> He said: 'What I mean is, there is no political mission? I am speaking honestly with you! My group have come here from Cairo at this time, eighteen people in all, on orders to observe you. With respect to our obligation of Hajj, we could have completed that at any time [due to our living in Egypt]. However, we received a telegram, and moreover received five hundred pounds wired to us only two or three days later, for which we otherwise have no need, all for the purpose of coming to Mecca at this time to observe your movements. The telegram accused you of having been involved in a fight [on your journey], and of having murdered people. We knew, however, that you have consistently devoted yourselves to Islam for the past twenty or thirty years. I was extremely eager, therefore, to see you today and ask for clarification.'[559]

This interaction echoed a similar conversation Tang had had a few days earlier with the Chinese Muslim GMD agent Ma Fuliang, who had also mentioned the accusations of Tang's group being involved in an "incident" in Singapore and a murder in Bombay.[560] Tang wrote that he replied to Pang "without the slightest alarm," saying he believed that the Chinese Azharites were understandably happy to see them after not having spoken for two or three years, that they were eager to hear news from the Muslims of North China, and that they must feel bad that Muslims from North China had not been able to make the Hajj in recent years. Tang added that he felt "tremendously distressed and hurt" (*feichang nanshou er shangxin*) by the accusations Pang mentioned.

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[559] Tang Yichen, *Majia xunli ji*, pp. 133-34.

Tang may have misremembered the number of people in the Chinese Azharite Hajj delegation, which was twenty-eight and not eighteen, according to Pang and Ma, "Huijiao chaojin tuan," p. 50, Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection, 11-WAA-00049. It may also have been a misprint.

[560] Tang, *Maijia xunli ji*; Hammond, "Conundrum of Collaboration," p. 225. Hammond also concludes that "This rumor-mongering by the GMD agents potentially indicates that these agents were expected to report on nefarious intentions of the [Japanese-sponsored] group[,] but when they were unable to provide their superiors with factual information they simply made things up."

Pang says nothing about this encounter in his report to the GMD Ministry of Foreign Affairs or in his memoir—both of which are otherwise reasonably detailed, and both of which included an entry for 30 January.[561] Therefore, if Tang's above account is reasonably accurate, was Pang trying to shame Tang into giving up his mission and defecting to the GMD's side? Was Tang trying to do the same to Pang? Was Tang trying to discredit Pang by describing their interaction, on the outside chance that Pang would fail to mention it, and that the GMD would then somehow obtain Tang's memoir, and wonder why Pang had failed to mention it? Or was Pang trying to warn Tang for his own sake that he was being watched and had been accused of wrongdoing? On the other hand, if the scene is primarily Tang's fabrication, was Tang attempting to portray the Chinese Azharites as less inherently pro-GMD than they claimed to be, and therefore open to overtures from the Japanese Empire? If Japan were to make an additional overture to the Chinese Azharites, Tang Yichen would have been the man for the job—and perhaps he would have gotten to see his old friends again. The fact that Tang knew about the five hundred pounds wired to the Chinese Azharites suggests that some interaction like this did take place. Either way, the various strands of motives are impossible to separate. If anything, however, the Chinese Azharites appear to have feared the GMD's opinion somewhat more than Tang feared that of the Japanese.

The two delegations appear more naturally concerned for one another as fellow Muslims from China than they appear categorically committed to the missions of their respective sponsors. Yet at the same time, both sides still cooperated to a high degree with their sponsors' objectives. Before parting ways, Tang reports that the two groups shook hands, exchanged

[561] Pang and Ma, "Huijiao chaojin tuan," Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection, 11-WAA-00049; Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, pp. 130-31.

Qurans, and conveyed that they were happy to have met one another in this faraway land. The two delegations also took a group photo together at Mount Arafat, dressed in their white *ihram* attire. Pang and Ma retained a copy of this photo, numbered and labeled the Japanese-sponsored delegation members, and attached it to their report to the GMD Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see Image 3).[562] Pang and Ma's report also passed along a large amount of general intelligence on the Hajj to the GMD Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Finally, it proposed establishing a GMD consulate in Jidda, in order to manage all Chinese Hajji affairs thenceforth. The GMD did in fact set up this consulate by October 1939, appointing the Chinese Azharite and Near East Delegation member Wang Shiming as its first consul-general.[563] The Chinese Azharites thus played a formative role in the Chinese state's first attempt at permanent regulation of the Chinese Hajj.

[562] The Japanese-sponsored group appears to have been the only one with its own camera, and it took many more photos than the GMD-sponsored one. Hammond, citing Tang Yichen's travelogue, says the photo at Mount Arafat was taken with the Japanese group's camera, and that Tang promised to send a copy of the photo to the Chinese Azharites after he had it developed in Beijing, but never got around to doing so. If this is true, it is unclear how Pang and Ma obtained the photo. Theirs was either taken with a separate camera, or Tang did indeed mail them a copy. The first possibility seems more likely, given that Pang and Ma sent their report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 12 March 1939, less than a month after their return to Egypt on 14 February. Hammond, "Conundrum of Collaboration," p. 231.

[563] This news was proudly announced in the journal of the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation: "Guonei duanxun: Wang Shiming jun rongren Jida lingshi [Domestic News Brief: Mr. Wang Shiming Honored with the Post of Consul-General at Jidda]," *Zhongguo huijiao jiuguo xiehui huikan*, 31 October 1939, p. 39.

IMAGE 3: The GMD- and Japanse-sponsored delegations' group photo at Mount Arafat, which Pang Shiqian and Ma Jian labelled and submitted to the GMD Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Source: Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives.

The South Seas Delegation: Islamic Modernist History as Chinese Diplomacy

In the same issue in which it publicized Wang Shiming's appointment as GMD consul-general at Jidda, the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation announced the formation of a "South Seas Delegation" (*nanyang fangwentuan*, December 1939-January 1941). Similar in conceit to the Near East Delegation, the South Seas Delegation consisted of three Chinese Muslim men tied to the government, business, military, publishing, and religious sectors. The National Salvation Federation chose Ma Tianying as the delegation's leader; in Singapore and Malaya, Ma came to be known as Hadj Ibrahim Ti-ying (or T.Y.) Ma. Ma served the delegation with his eloquence, experience, and embodiment of the gentlemanly ethos of interwar public Islam. The second member was Wu Jianxun, also known as Othman Kien-Hsun Woo, an army officer and *Yuehua* contributor. Of the three, Wu was most directly responsible for disseminating the delegation's

anti-Japanese propaganda; he was also in charge of compiling the delegation's diary. The third was the imam Ma Dawu of Guangzhou (Canton), who also went by Yakoob Matawu—valuable to the delegation especially for his knowledge of both Arabic and Cantonese.[564]

The South Seas Delegation differed from the Near East Delegation in two important respects. First, it made the "religious" dimension of Islam more integral to its work through the inclusion of Imam Ma Dawu, who opened many if not all the delegation's hundreds of meetings with a recitation of the *Fatiha*—something Xue Wenbo did not mention in his catalog of the Near East Delegation's meetings. Second, and relatedly, the South Seas Delegation offered a selective but concerted narrative of long-standing Sino-Islamic "civilizational" engagement in Southeast Asia, typified by trade, cultural contact, and above all the early-fifteenth-century maritime voyages the Yunnanese Muslim general Zheng He made on behalf of the Ming dynasty. In one of its communications to Malayan Muslims and overseas Chinese in Malaya, the delegation proposed the creation of a bilateral cultural association honoring that history:

> To our Brethren in Islam and to our Fellow-Countrymen in Malaysia:
>
> Mohammad SAN PAO [i.e. Admiral Zheng He] of Yunnan came to Malaysia in the year of 1405. He has done [sic] a lot for the education of, and the introduction of Islam to, the People of Malaysia. At the same time he brought many Chinese to the Islands and the Peninsulas of [the] South Seas. These Chinese have prospered up to these days in Malaysia.
>
> For commemorating the great and noble works done by the greatest navigator in the Far-East and for looking up [sic] the good friendship between Muslims and the Chinese Residents, we beg to propose the formation of a Society or Association which may be named, "Sino-Muslim Cultural [*wenhua*] Society" founded in memory of Mohammad SAN PAO.[565]

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[564] The medical donations collected by the South Seas Delegation were discussed in Chapter Three. The larger story of the South Seas Delegation is introduced in detail in Chen, "'Just Like Old Friends,'" pp. 707-23.

[565] This letter was published in side-by-side English and Chinese versions; the English version is reproduced here. As stated in Chen, "'Just Like Old Friends,'" p. 730n62: "This letter appears to have been published with the CISSD's 1939 diary. I cannot account for the use of the term 'Malaysia' rather than 'Malaya' in the English version; perhaps it resulted from Chinese Muslims' exposure to Orientalist sources that had used this term since the nineteenth century, but I have not found direct evidence of this. The Chinese term used by the CISSD, and by Guomindang (later Taiwanese) of cial documents at least until the country's of cial change of name in 1963, was *malaiya*, not *malaixiya*."

Each of the three men composed a preface to the delegation's diary. Of the three, Ma Dawu's placed this "civilizational" exchange in relationship to a modernist understanding of the history of Islam:

> *Huijiao* or, as it was originally known, *yisilan* [Islam], meaning "peace", is a religion possessing a spirit of interdependence [*huzhu jingshen*]. If a country or people has a true spirit of interdependence, it can ourish and grow strong.... You could say that Islam is a religion that bene ts state and society alike. You could also say that it is a world religion that humanity cannot do without. When we recall past eras, we see that peoples and countries, upon accepting Islam, became stronger and more prosperous [*jiu fuqiang xingsheng qilaile*]. This is an undeniable feature inscribed on the pages of history. In the present century, however, Muslim countries are among those that have fallen behind. Having lost the true spirit of Islam is probably a reason for this falling behind. Thus Muslim countries must work to safeguard this spirit.[566]

Ma's statement suggests that the South Seas Delegation had thought through more thoroughly than the 1937-39 Near East Delegation or even the January-February Chinese Azharite Hajj delegation how to integrate into its diplomatic work a historical argument informed by Islamic modernism. According to this logic, the periods of florescence in Islamic (and even human) history owed to Muslims developing a peaceful "spirit of interdependence," whereas Muslim societies tended to fall behind when they were relatively cut off from one another. In the context of the South Seas Delegation, Ma's statement implied that the way to honor that legacy and uphold that pattern in the present was for the Muslims of the South Seas to come to the aid of their fellow Muslims in China and to support China's war against Japan. That the South Seas Delegation managed to collect a very large sum[567] in medical donations from the widest possible

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[566] Ma Dawu, "Preface (III)," *ZGHJNYFWTRJ*, p. x.

[567] Mainland Chinese scholars report that the amount was 800,000 yuan. Ma Tianying later stated in private communications that the figure was in fact 800,000 U.S. dollars. It is unclear which account is the accurate one.

range of political, commercial, and cultural leaders in Singapore and Malaya suggests that this narration of a shared Sino-Islamic past indeed realized its intended effect.

Conclusion: Culture and Power

The period after the inauguration of modern steam travel but before the Second Sino-Japanese War is crucial for our understanding both of the Chinese Hajj specifically and of modern Chinese Muslim identity generally. The Hajj of Ma Songting and Zhao Zhenwu is one highly consequential episode in modern Chinese Islamic history where a reading of events centered on the *umma* and an alternative reading centered in China are both possible. Whereas the *umma*-centric reading highlights how post-Ottoman aspirations for transnational Islamic unity had not yet faded from consciousness, the Sino-centric reading illustrates how an emerging alliance between the Guomindang government and elite Chinese Muslims co-opted the authority of Islamic modernism in an era when nationalism and state-building processes were on the rise.

While Ma Songting and Zhao Zhenwu's Hajj and travels in many ways set the stage for the Near East, Hajj, and South Seas Delegations, in another sense the wartime delegations represented something entirely new: again, an instrumentalization and deputization of Islam and Muslims in service of the nation. From the GMD government's perspective, there was little to be lost from these delegations: the mission required no commitment of wartime materiel or permanent diplomatic installations, only salaries for the members and some logistical coordination. Redirecting the policies of the countries they visited was beyond these delegations' reach. At most, they achieved certain "softer" objectives, such as the collection of medical materials and donations from Muslims and overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia.

From the perspective of the Chinese Muslim elites, however, there was everything to be gained from these delegations. Ultimately, the delegations were less significant for effecting a

contribution to the war with Japan, and much more significant for affecting such a contribution. Perhaps the Chinese Muslim elites hoped that such a dramatic demonstration of effort and sacrifice for China in its moment of greatest existential threat would leave no doubt as to the loyalties of China's Muslims, which in turn could help make them safer from Islamophobia and violence once "peace" returned. Quite independently from their tangible impact, the delegations illustrate the enormous level of trust the GMD government placed in Chinese Muslim elites, and Chinese Muslim elites' high valuation of that trust, in their capacity as intermediaries between China and the Islamic world. This trust included the assumption that the delegations would not engage in subversive activities abroad, and that they would police and censor themselves while traveling far beyond the point where the GMD could surveil them. This trust was born of necessity: the Chinese Muslim elites were indeed the best candidates to conduct this diplomatic work, and the GMD government relied heavily on them in a time of desperation, tight budgets, and minimal overseas capacity. In sum, the greatest impact of the delegations was not on China or its war effort, but on the Chinese Muslims themselves. These delegations represented an alternative approach to the project of "making Islam Chinese," one that did not require years toiling to re-educate local Muslims on the frontiers. Instead, they introduced a dynamic in which Chinese Muslims largely presented themselves to their fellow Muslims and the wider world as *Chinese who happened to be Muslim*, rather than as *Muslims who happened to be Chinese*.

Perhaps sensing this subtle yet momentous transformation, the aspiring Chinese Muslim *ulama* at al-Azhar—living in Cairo during the period immediately before, during, and immediately after the war—had a chance to rethink whether the project of Sinicization and the notion of Muslims' "contribution" to the nation-state formed a sufficient basis for a modern Chinese Muslim identity. For certain Chinese Azharites, the answer remained "yes": some of

them appear to have seen their time in Egypt in relatively instrumental terms, as an extension of the narrative of contribution and of their political work in China, especially to educate and integrate the Muslims of the Northwest frontiers; these were the ones who tended to enjoy greater career success upon returning to China. For others, however, their unprecedentedly deep engagement with Islamic modernist thought at al-Azhar and in Cairo's intellectual environment offered an opportunity to identify new, firmer conceptual foundations on which to be truly modern, truly Chinese, and truly Muslim at the same time. Their stories follow.

PART III

TURNING POINTS

CHAPTER FIVE: A MEETING OF MINDS: THE CHINESE MUSLIMS IN CAIRO

> When the Guomindang government consolidated its rule in Nanjing in 1928, some Muslims felt the need to bring their sentiments in line with the new era. Sheikh Nur Muhammad Da Pusheng…Ustaaz 'Abd al-Hakim Sun Shengwu [and others] founded a national Muslim association in Shanghai in 1929, with two objectives: strengthening the bonds between Muslims and supporting Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People in building the new state. These efforts, however, did not yield significant results.
> –Pang Shiqian, 1945, in Arabic[568]

> At one point when I was speaking with Sheikh al-Maraghi, he asked me, "I have heard that your students will take up political work upon returning to their country?" "Some of them," I answered. He replied, "They have studied religion; religion is the cause for which they should work. God Almighty said: 'It is not for the believers to go forth into battle all at once. A group of them should always remain to grow in their understanding of the religion and to warn their people when they return, that perchance they might be cautious.' Taking part in politics is unavoidable, but perhaps other brothers of yours could be sent to do that work. The cause of religion wanes by the day. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'When Muslims leave home, they must also return.' But we must not lose hope. As the Quran tells us, those who despair are without belief."
> –Pang Shiqian, 1950, in Chinese, recalling the words of Mustafa al-Maraghi[569]

Introduction: The Chinese Muslims in Cairo

The preceding chapters have illustrated various aspects of Chinese Muslims' engagement with and application of Islamic modernism in the first four decades of the twentieth century. Chapter One surveyed the rise of Islamic modernist institutions and traced how leading *ulama* identified Islamic modernism by around 1930 as the most correct and relevant body of thought to follow. Chapter Two analyzed how this engagement with Islamic modernism informed Chinese Muslim's participation in Guomindang frontier nation-building, especially but not exclusively in the realm of wartime frontier education. Chapter Three introduced how Islamic modernism

[568] Tawadu' (Pang), *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, p. 84.

[569] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 96. The first quotation from al-Maraghi is Quran 9:122 (al-Tawbah, i.e. Repentance). In al-Maraghi's last sentence, Pang quotes him as though he is quoting Quran 60:13 verbatim; the actual phrase differs somewhat, but nevertheless implies Pang's meaning: "O you who have believed, do not make allies of a people with whom God has become angry. They have despaired of [reward in] the Hereafter just as the disbelievers have despaired of [meeting] the inhabitants of the graves."

provided a set of polemics and temporal and spatial logics to help counter Han Chinese Islamophobia and re-narrate Sino-Islamic history in terms of Muslims' "contributions to Chinese civilization." The end of Chapter Three and Chapter Four detailed how that narrative of contribution shaped GMD-sponsored Chinese Muslim diplomacy toward Muslim countries during the war with Japan, in the context of the nationalization of the Hajj and the increasing regulation, co-optation, and deputization of Chinese Muslim travel abroad.

The present chapter introduces a new dimension in the relationship between the dynamics of borderless textual transnationalism emphasized in Chapters One and Three and those of bordered co-optation emphasized in Two and Four, turning to the history of the Chinese Muslim student delegations to al-Azhar, Cairo's millennium-old center of Islamic learning. The young Chinese Muslim *ulama*'s journeys to Cairo in the 1930s and 1940s were arguably the most significant and complex episode in Chinese Muslims' rediscovery of the Islamic world outside China, their engagement with Islamic modernism, and the enlistment of those activities within the now familiar matrix of elite Chinese Muslim integrationism, Chinese nationalism, GMD nation-building, and wartime exigencies. The Chinese Azharites' story epitomizes the ways in which Islamic modernism represented the fruition of Chinese Muslims' growing transnational connections, yet still subtly honed the tools for making Islam Chinese.

After providing the necessary background on al-Azhar and its modern reforms, this chapter focuses on three questions: First, who were the Chinese Azharites? What motives and mechanisms explain their unique stories and superlative (yet co-optable) achievements? Second, what was the intellectual and social world that received them in Cairo, at al-Azhar and beyond? What Arabic-speaking audiences were interested in what they had to say about China and Islam in China, and why? Third, what did the Chinese Azharites learn from that world? How did

Islamic modernist thought, absorbed from the source, promise to inform and refine the integrationist politics of their elite Chinese Muslim and GMD sponsors? What elements of that Islamic modernism, in the view of the Chinese Azharites, mattered most to Islam in China?

On the one hand, the Chinese Azharites' journeys "in search of knowledge" (Ar. *talab al-'ilm*; Ch. *qiuxue* or *qiuzhi*) represented an unprecedented opportunity for engagement with a major Muslim society and a major center of Islamic thought. These journeys had the potential, they felt, to reverse Chinese Muslims' centuries of isolation from the Islamic world outside China. Did they succeed? To answer this question, this chapter considers the perspectives of the Arabic-speaking Middle Eastern Muslim actors with whom the Chinese Azharites met and whose works they read. It traces in depth the status of "China" and Chinese Islam in modern Arabic and Islamic thought in the Middle East. As will be detailed below, these topics consistently drew the attention of several well-known Egyptian and Arab intellectuals, *ulama*, monarchs, publishers, and Muslim activists, including the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.

On the other hand, the inescapable question of Chinese Muslims' status in China, and particularly the fate of the Northwest frontiers, overshadowed and fundamentally shaped even this otherwise multifaceted episode. The Azhar missions began in the early 1930s at the same time as the GMD's Northwest frontier development, and many Muslim leaders who were involved in the one were also involved in the other, especially the administration of Chengda Academy. Tang Kesan, Ma Songting, Da Pusheng, Bai Chongxi, and others assumed that the Chinese Azharites would return to China after their studies in order to improve the quality and quantity of Chinese Muslim instructors sent to the Northwest to educate, Sinicize, and integrate the Muslims living there.[570] Again, as the thinking went, Chinese Muslim *ulama* returning from

[570] Though not always articulated explicitly, statements such as the Fu'ad Library committee's book request letter from Chapter Two make clear how study in Egypt was in fact designed to serve the interests of nation-building and

Egypt could train cadres of instructors to open frontier schools, teach an Islamic modernist curriculum, rectify erroneous Sufi traditions, and thereby transform "superstitious" and "irrational" frontier Muslims into good modern Muslims and patriotic Chinese citizens. This is what Chinese Muslim leaders meant when they said that students were going to al-Azhar to gain deeper knowledge of Islam in keeping with "modern trends."

The Chinese Azharites possessed the potential to make that initiative considerably more sophisticated. So far, the GMD state and its elite Chinese Muslim allies had approached frontier Muslims with a program of blunt Sinicization through Chinese language instruction and indoctrination in the Three People's Principles. As Pang Shiqian's first statement above suggests, some members of the younger generation of Chinese Muslim *ulama* felt that their leaders' efforts to cooperate with the GMD government, form national-level communal organizations, and support frontier development had been somewhat superficial. After all, the Sinicizing approach to the frontiers, as well as Chinese Muslim leaders' perhaps transparently embellished professions of nationalism, had not worked. Frontier Muslims were certainly not leading better lives, and many were rising up in rebellion against the GMD government during the war years. Moreover, the intercommunal violence and Islamophobia discussed in previous chapters continued unabated throughout the 1930s and 1940s.

Egypt and al-Azhar offered numerous solutions to the challenges facing Islam and Muslims in China. Shaped in multiple ways by their experiences in Cairo, the Chinese Azharites exemplified the ways in which modern Chinese Muslims' exploratory, non-hierarchical

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frontier development. More generally, most foreign students attended al-Azhar with the intention of bringing their knowledge back to their home societies, but the journey tended to be more strictly bi-directional for the Chinese Azharites than for most other Muslim students there, who would often take detours to live and study in other regions before re-settling, if they did, in or near their places of origin.

transnationalism intersected with pedagogical, hegemonizing integrationism. In at least one case, however, a Chinese Azharite attempted instead to posit an expanded commitment to Islamic modernist conceptions of human reason as an alternative basis for helping Islam and Muslims in China to survive and, hopefully, achieve a measure of moral and material progress.

The "Beating Heart of the Islamic World": Al-Azhar and its Modern Reforms

Al-Azhar, regarded as the greatest center of learning in Islam, was established in the Fatimid Dynasty (297-567AH/909-1171AD) during the reign of the Caliph al-Mu'izz li-Din-illah. It was the first large mosque in the newly founded city of Cairo. Construction lasted from 359AH/970AD until 361AH/972AD. Over the centuries, Egypt's many rulers—Fatimids, Ayyubids (1171-1250), Mamluks (1250-1517), Ottomans (1517-1918), and the dynasty of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha (1805-1953)—expanded and renewed al-Azhar's institutions and physical structures on an ongoing basis. The traditional system of instruction involved students approaching sheikhs with whom they wanted to study, sitting at their feet on the grounds of the mosque, and listening to lessons in groups or "study circles" (*halaqat*).[571] Over time, al-Azhar developed new rules and regulations as the number of students increased and as the courses of study grew more complex. In the late Ottoman era, however, early generations of modernist reformers such as Hassan Al-'Attar and Rifa'a al-Tahtawi increasingly agreed that traditional madrasa education was insufficient to meet modern challenges; this critique grew in the last quarter of the nineteenth century under the influence of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani.[572] These

[571] See Indira Falk Gesink, *Islamic Reform and Conservatism: Al-Azhar and the Evolution of Modern Sunni Islam* (I.B. Tauris, 2010), pp. 17-19 on halaqat. There were few formalities such as registration, examinations, or degrees. Although the Fatimids were Shia, curricula were eventually set by authorities in each of the four major Sunni schools of interpretation and jurisprudence (*madhhab*, pl. *madhahib*) as they saw fit. Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, pp. 1-3.

[572] Gesink, *Islamic Reform and Conservatism*, Chs. 3-4.

critiques culminated in al-Azhar's first "general law" (*qanun*), promulgated in 1288AH/1872AD under the Sheikh al-Azhar Muhammad ʻAbbas al-Mahdi and certified by the Khedive Ismail Pasha (r.1863-79). At this point, examinations were instituted for the first time, administered by a committee nominated by the Sheikh al-Azhar (i.e. "Rector" or intellectual head of the institution). Successful students would obtain the *shahada* and the rank of *ʻalim* ("Islamic scholar," divided into three grades). Muhammad ʻAbduh (1849-1905), eventually regarded as al-Azhar's greatest modernist reformer, was himself a student at al-Azhar during this period, passing his exams in 1877.[573]

Several additional reform laws followed under the Khedive ʻAbbas II (r.1892-1914) and Fu'ad I (r.1922-36), instituting a new curriculum blending Islamic and "modern" modes of learning, encouraged by the Sheikh al-Azhar at the time, Hassunah al-Nawawi, as well as Muhammad ʻAbduh.[574] The organizational system and curriculum in effect for most of the Chinese Azharites' time in Cairo was based on "Law 26" (*Qanun raqam 26*) of 1936. This law stipulated that studies at al-Azhar would be divided into four levels: (1) a primary school level, lasting four years, after which the student would obtain a primary school diploma (2) a high school level, lasting five years, the prerequisite for which was the primary school level, and after which the student would obtain a high school diploma (3) a college level, lasting four years, the prerequisite for which was the high school level (4) a Research Institute. The college was divided into three faculties: (1) The Faculty of Law (*Kulliyyat al-shariʻa*) (2) The Faculty of Theology (*Kulliyyat usul al-din*) (3) The Faculty of Letters (*Kulliyyat al-aadab*).[575] Each of these faculties

[573] ʻAbd al-Mutaʻal al-Saʻidi, *Tarikh al-Islah fi-l-Azhar wa safahat min al-jihad fi-l-islah* [*A History of the Reform Movement at al-Azhar, with Major Episodes in the Struggle for Reform*] (Cairo: Matbaʻat al-Iʻtimad, 1943), pp. 34-35.

[574] Gesink, *Islamic Reform*, Ch. 6; *Tarikh al-islah fi-l-Azhar*, pp. 58-59, 73. These included the "Law of 1314" (*qanun [sanat] 1314*), "Law 10" (*Qanun raqam 10*, 1908).

taught Quran, Hadith, and logic, but approached them from distinct disciplinary perspectives. Beyond these core subjects, the three faculties diverged, with the Faculty of Law emphasizing principles of jurisprudence (*usul al-fiqh*) and the comparative study of the four *madhahib*; the Faculty of Theology emphasizing *tawhid*, ethics, and philosophy; and the Faculty of Letters emphasizing the structures, history, and literary production of the Arabic language. The *shahada* in each of these faculties would be granted upon the students' passing all its subordinate fields (eight in all for law; ten for theology, fifteen for literature). Upon obtaining the college-level *shahada*, a newly minted *'alim* could pursue advanced studies in the Research Institute, which was divided into two departments: (1) The Specialized Subjects Department (*qism al-takhassus*),[576] consisting of Justice, *Da'wa*, and Education subdivisions, and (2) The Research Department, consisting of subdivisions for *sharia*, *tawhid*, Quran and Hadith, history of Islam, and Arabic language.[577] The main purpose of the Research Institute was to refine al-Azhar's pedagogy and content at all levels, college, high-school, and primary.

While prioritizing the Islamic sciences in content, the form of al-Azhar's modernist curriculum drew upon an increasingly global pedagogical consensus typified and propagated by institutions such as Columbia University's Teachers' College in the age of John Dewey, well-known for directly or indirectly influencing generations of students from China, the Middle East, and elsewhere. This influence is visible not only in the inclusion of subjects such as psychology, education, physical education, and so on, but even more fundamentally in the rigid subdivision of the curriculum by discipline and time, in the institutionalization of standards for content and

[575] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 4; *Tarikh al-islah fi-l-Azhar*.

[576] Several *Qism al-takhassus* documents are available on www.alazharmemory.org.

[577] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, pp. 5-6.

student performance, and in the conviction that all subjects technical or non-technical could and should be taught "scientifically."

Al-Azhar's purpose was to improve knowledge of Islam and the Arabic language, or in Pang's words, to "develop Islamic civilization for every corner of the world."[578] This mission made al-Azhar not only a unique institution, but a unique community. According to Pang (and no doubt many of his colleagues), al-Azhar was a source of "correct thought," of "answers to all manner of questions regarding Islam," and of intellectual and pedagogical "standards" that could be profitably applied to Muslim societies elsewhere.[579] Al-Azhar's official periodical, *Nur al-Islam* (later known as *Majallat al-Azhar*, 1930-), distilled much of this thought, these answers, and these standards, and was read, discussed, and translated by modernist Muslims everywhere. According to Pang, its library, constructed starting in 1897, housed forty thousand volumes by the 1940s, "perhaps fifteen thousand of these [were] manuscripts, including major classic works and treasured rare editions, many written by the authors themselves."[580] Al-Azhar's prestige derived not only from rigor or authority, but from its universalizing aspirations, its pluralistic atmosphere, and its breadth of audience. The school's laws stated that it would admit Muslims regardless of nationality at all levels. Pang noted that students were not divided by nationality (except for residential purposes), and that foreign students in fact "received special treatment."[581] Moreover, he asserted, "The foreign and Egyptian students get along equally well. They do not

[578] Ibid., p. 9.

[579] Ibid., p. 14. For the closest comparison to the case of the Chinese Azharites, see Mona Abaza, "Some Research Notes on Living Conditions and Perceptions among Indonesian Students in Cairo," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 22/2 (September 1991): pp. 347-60; Michael Laffan, "An Indonesian Community in Cairo: Continuity and Change in a Cosmopolitan Islamic Milieu," *Indonesia* 77 (April 2004): pp. 1-26.

[580] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 11.

[581] Ibid., p. 9.

segregate themselves, but work together on their research and studies." After completing their studies, the non-Egyptian students would "return to their home countries to propagate Islamic culture and act as guides for their people."[582] Overall, al-Azhar gave life and weight to the Quranic statement, often invoked by the Chinese Azharites and their counterparts in Cairo, that "Verily all the believers are brothers" (*innama al-mu'minuna ikhwatun*, 49:10, al-Hujurat). "Al-Azhar," Pang felt compelled to add, "is the beating heart of the Islamic world."

Journeys in Search of Knowledge: Careers and Thought of the Chinese Azharites

Foreign students were a prominent presence at al-Azhar in the first half of the twentieth century. According to Pang's count, there were 613 foreign students from 36 countries studying at al-Azhar in 1940, or 4.5 percent of the total 13,673 students enrolled at all levels. Assuming that the foreign students were disproportionately weighted at the college level, and that many of the primary- and high-school-level students were at al-Azhar's branch locations in other cities and provinces, the proportion of foreign students among their immediate peers in Cairo could have been much higher, perhaps 25 percent.[583] The foreign students lived in special dormitories organized by country or region, known as *riwaq* (pl. *arwiqa*).[584] Overall, al-Azhar's funding,

[582] Ibid.

[583] I am assuming that the primary- and high-school-level students were predominantly though certainly not exclusively Egyptian. I am also assuming that foreign students at the lower levels would be more likely to come from neighboring countries, especially Sudan, Libya, Palestine, and Syria. At the extreme, if all 613 foreign students were enrolled in the college (unlikely, but important for the sake of argument), they would represent 31 percent of the total 1,963. As a comparison, in 2013, Harvard University stated that approximately 20 percent of the incoming undergraduate class of 2017 were foreigners, including foreign citizens, U.S. duals, and permanent residents. https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2013/03/college-admits-2029-5-8-percent-of-applicants/.

[584] Originally organized by the Fatimid Caliph al-'Aziz Billah (r.975-996AD) and located in the vicinity of the Azhar Mosque, the *riwaq* system was a form of pious endowment (*waqf*, pl. *awqaf*), with each one generally established by a wealthy patron from the same country or region as the *riwaq*'s students. For a detailed picture of the *riwaq* system in modern times, see Abaza and Laffan on the Indonesian community, as well as Gesink, *Islamic Reform*, Ch. 7.

including for students' stipends (from 3LE to 20LE per month, depending on seniority and achievement), came from the royal coffers, the national treasury, the Ministry of Pious Endowments, and the charity of senior officials and other notable figures. Stipends for the sixth and final delegation of Chinese Azharites (1938-46), led by Pang, were provided by King Farouq I out of his personal funds.[585]

Turkey	75
Maghrib (Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria)	136
Bilad al-Sham (Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Transjordan)	103
Sudan	79
Abyssinia (including Djibouti)	36
Kurdistan	13
Japan	1
Hijaz	9
Darfur	2
Afghanistan	7
China	28
Yemen	34
South Africa	2
Iraq	12
Nigeria	14
India	4
Java (including Java, Sumatra, and Malaya)	57
TOTAL	613

Table. Al-Azhar's foreign students, 1940. Source: Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, pp. 10-11.

A few observations are warranted. First, the sheer range of countries is remarkable. The countries of the Middle East and North Africa understandably sent more students than other countries and regions, but perhaps neither as absolutely nor as disproportionately as one would expect. China was sending more students than Iraq, for example. Second, the fact that China sent far more students than India reflects the relatively high quality of Indian Islamic educational institutions, and the relative weakness, real or perceived, of Chinese ones. Third, as was already

[585] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 15.

well-known, a huge number of students came to al-Azhar from Java—significant for the present study because the Chinese Azharites appear to have gotten along particularly well with the Jawi students, due to perceptions of cultural affinity, of similar "remoteness" from the core lands of Islam, of shared experiences of European imperialism, and of the similar challenges facing reform-minded modernist Muslims in their countries, especially toward the field of education.[586]

Before the Chinese Azharites, Muslims from China had in fact traveled to Egypt from time to time and participated in these transnational networks, usually only one or two at a time, for at least a century.[587] The first who definitely reached Egypt was Imam Ma Dexin (a.k.a. Ma Fuchu, 1794-1874), a merchant and scholar from Dali, Yunnan. Ma reached Egypt on 5 Shawwal 1260/17 October 1844 after making the Hajj.[588] His travelogue, *Chaojin tuji* (*Record of a Pilgrimage*), was published in Yunnan in 1864 by Ma Rulong.[589] The work is unusual in that it gives proper nouns in both Arabic script (indicated in italics below) and character-based Chinese transliteration (also indicated below) within the Chinese text. Upon arriving in "Mi-si-er" (i.e. *Misr*, generally meaning Egypt, but here meaning Cairo), Ma observed that:

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[586] Mona Abaza, "Some Research Notes on Living Conditions and Perceptions among Indonesian Students in Cairo," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 22/2 (September 1991): pp. 347-60; Michael Laffan, "An Indonesian Community in Cairo: Continuity and Change in a Cosmopolitan Islamic Milieu," *Indonesia* 77 (April 2004): 1-26.

[587] The previous chapter discussed Ma Huan of Yunnan, who reached Mecca with the Zheng He expeditions in the early fifteenth century; Ma Laichi of Linxia, Gansu, who studied in Yemen with an Indian Naqshbandi sheikh in the 1730s and returned to establish the Huasi order of the Naqshbandiyya at Linxia's Huasi Gongbei; and Ma Mingxin, who established a branch of the Jahriyya in the same region. Available evidence, however, suggests that these figures did not reach Egypt. Fletcher, "The Naqshbandiyya"; Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*.

[588] Ma left China in 1257/1841 and reached Mecca the following year. Pang says he reached Egypt in 1836, which is impossible, and probably a typo. Ma visited Alexandria, Istanbul, and Palestine before returning to Egypt briefly in November 1261AH (late 1845AD), making another journey to Mecca, and returning to Egypt a third time in Dhul-hijjah 1262 (late 1846).

[589] Ma Rulong was a powerful Muslim general in Yunnan's Muslim rebellions of 1856-72 who switched sides to support the Qing in 1862, two years before he published Ma Dexin's *Chaojin tuji*. While it is impossible to know how much Ma Rulong may have altered the text to accord with his political change of heart, perhaps it was enough to be seen as a patron of Yunnan's most prestigious and well-traveled imam. See Atwill, "Blinkered Visions," p. 1093.

> *Misr*/Mi-si-er is an enormous city. At the present time, its ruler is *Muhammad ʻAli*/Mu-han-mo-de Er-li. Great wisdom and great heroism are his. He excels in both thought and action. In his dominion of *Misr*/Mi-si-er, he establishes [new institutions], stores up [funds], sells [goods], and expands [the state]. He also supports all manner of learning, crafts, and industry. He studies *Firansi*/Fu-lang-xi [French] society. Anything that is needed, he makes; he does not go begging things from others. His kingdom is *Muslim*/Mu-si-lin, with a large population. There are over one hundred mosques in the city. The most imposing and magnificent of these is the *Jamiʻ al-Azhar*/Zhuo-mi-er-a-zi-xie. The followers of numerous sages and schools of thought reside in this country. Among the graves of its notables is the tomb of *al-Shafiʻi*/Sha-fei-er, which the people often visit.[590]

Pang states that Ma received one to two years of formal education in Cairo, presumably at al-Azhar.[591] Unfortunately, Ma's *Chaojin tuji* does not specify, but it would seem entirely possible given the long stretches of time he would spend in each locale, and given the amount of information omitted in his tantalizingly concise account.[592] Equally provocatively, al-Azhar claims that the Chinese dormitory, or *riwaq al-Sin*, was established in the nineteenth century—later than those of most major Muslim countries, but considerably earlier than we might expect.[593] It remains unknown who may have established and funded this Chinese *riwaq*.

Chinese Muslims returned to al-Azhar in the early twentieth century, at which point they began relying on al-Azhar more concertedly as a basis for educational reforms in China. As discussed in Chapter One, from 1905 to 1907, Imam Wang Kuan (Wang Haoran) and his "most brilliant pupil" Imam Ma Debao, made a journey to both Egypt and Istanbul. Upon returning to

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[590] Ma Fuchu, *Chaojin tuji*, p. 8. See Petersen, *Interpreting Islam in China*, especially pp. 113-21.

[591] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 16.

[592] Ma states that he went to Mecca yet again in 1263, where he met a Javanese man named Ahmad Mushaffiʻ. He left Jedda for Southeast Asia in mid-1263/1847. He spent time in Aceh and Singapore, and met "Sayyid ʻUmar of Hadramawt" in Singapore, i.e. Syed Sharif Omar bin Ali Al Junied (d.1852), the patriarch of the al-Junied family in Singapore. He then went north through India and Afghanistan before turning westward yet again, arriving in Damascus, Tripoli, and back in Egypt, intending to make the Hajj again. The narrative terminates here.

[593] "Al-Baʻathat al-taʻlimiyya li-talabat al-duwal al-islamiyya fi-l-Azhar [Islamic Countries' Student Delegations to al-Azhar]," Azhar Memory. http://alazharmemory.eg/topics/topicsDetails.aspx?id=43#.

Beijing, these two imams began to implement a reformed style of Islamic education at Niujie Mosque emphasizing Quran, Hadith, and Arabic language education. In the following two decades, al-Azhar's role increased after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and Ataturk's abolition of traditional Islamic educational institutions in Istanbul. Imams Ha Decheng and Zhou Zibin, as well as Imam Wang Jingzhai and his apprentice Ma Hongdao, all spent time in Egypt.[594] Pang relates that "these figures all traveled to Egypt to study as individuals, often without a fixed plan."[595] The formal, bilaterally state-sponsored, and meticulously planned Chinese Azharite delegations of the 1930s and 1940s therefore represented a chance to build on and systematize a heretofore piecemeal process of transmission and institutionalization.

The Chinese Azharites, thirty-five individuals in total, traveled to Egypt in six groups of one to fifteen people each, the first arriving in December 1931 and the last departing in April 1946. In general terms, they were all male, almost all in their twenties, and all extremely hardworking students. They possessed a relatively high level of proficiency in both Chinese and Arabic, a key criterion for selection; most knew some English, French, or perhaps Japanese as well. They studied in all three of al-Azhar's college-level faculties, though many required remedial Arabic lessons first. Most gained their *shahada*. It is remarkable, and a testament to their determination and assiduousness, that their proficiency in Arabic sufficed to achieve this, particularly given the near impossibility of learning Egyptian colloquial Arabic in China.[596] In

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[594] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 16. Pang adds that around the time of the First World War, Zhao Yingxiang of Jiezhou, Gansu, and Ma Kaitang of Xing'an, Shaanxi, also traveled to Egypt and formally enrolled in a course of study at al-Azhar—illustrating that reformism linked to al-Azhar, generally a concern of urban coastal Chinese Muslims, could at times extend into the interior.

[595] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 16.

[596] Ma Songting and Zhao Zhenwu agreed with al-Azhar and King Fu'ad I to bring two Azhar instructors to China in 1933 to teach at Chengda, but there is no evidence that these instructors provided formal instruction in conversational Arabic.

addition, many were prolific writers and translators, continuing to publish in Chinese in *Yuehua* and other venues during their time in Egypt, and in some cases publishing original articles, books, or translations in Arabic as well. Many also enjoyed public success upon returning to China between 1939 and 1947, becoming involved in frontier education reform, diplomacy, higher education (especially Arabic instruction and historical research), translating, writing and publishing, local or national Muslim institutions, or Muslim community leadership, while in some cases also continuing to work as *ulama*.[597] The Anti-Rightist Campaign of 1958 and the Cultural Revolution of 1966-76, however, brought a sharp downturn in the fortunes of some. Certain aspects of the Chinese Azharites' stories have been rehabilitated and celebrated since the 1980s, usually with a high degree of selectivity, as exemplars of "patriotic religious figures."

While perhaps not immediately obvious, politics mattered for the Chinese Azharites even more than academic or professional achievement. Crucially, almost all of them hailed from China's majority-Han coastal cities or agrarian regions—Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Hunan, Hebei, Henan, Shandong, and Shanxi—or from Sichuan or Yunnan, which tended to be tied into the same networks despite their relative distance from the coast. Only three of the thirty-five came from the frontiers: two from Xinjiang and one from Chahar (a now defunct province comprising portions of present-day Ningxia and Inner Mongolia). Moreover, thirty-four of the thirty-five, including the three from Xinjiang and Chahar, were trained at Islamic modernist institutions in China: Yunnan's Mingde High School, Beijing's Chengda Academy (run by Ma

[597] Specifically, before 1949, the Chinese Azharites earned teaching positions and helped establish Arabic departments at Peking University (*Beijing daxue*), National Central University (*Zhongyang daxue*), Nanjing Eastern Languages Institute (*Nanjing dongfang yuyan zhuanke xuexiao*), Yunnan University (*Yunnan daxue*), and so on. After 1949, they worked at Peking University (where Ma Jian established the Arabic Department), Beijing Foreign Languages University (*Beijing waiguo yuyan daxue*), Beijing Normal University (*Beijing shifan daxue*, where Pang Shiqian established the Arabic Department), and the People's Liberation Army Foreign Languages University (*Jiefangjun waiguo yuyan daxue*). See Chinese Azharites 80th anniversary edited volume, intro p. 4.

Songting and Tang Kesan, with input from Wang Jingzhai), or Shanghai's Islamic Normal School (operated by Ha Decheng and Da Pusheng).

Rather tellingly, the thirty-fifth—Hai Weiliang a.k.a. Badr al-Din al-Sini, born to humble origins in rural Hunan, educated in India after the primary level, proceeding directly from there to Egypt, and therefore neither conditioned by GMD politics nor compelled to take a qualification exam in China prior to studying at al-Azhar—was the only Chinese Azharite who was overtly critical of the Chinese state, and who openly advocated Islamic solidarity in a political form. This was especially the case when Hai wrote in Arabic, a language in which he gained greater fluency and wrote more prolifically even than Pang Shiqian. Hai's hero was Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, a figure he lauded in both his Arabic and Chinese writings.[598]

At least in public, however, most of the Chinese Azharites professed nationalistic sentiments and supported reforming Islamic education across China. They may have had little choice in the matter. Funded partly by the GMD Ministry of Education (making them ostensibly answerable to Chen Lifu from 1938-44), and required to complete a "politics" section on their qualification exams (in fact, that was the first section of the exam), they might have been less likely to be selected if they had displayed anything seeming like political loyalty to Islam (whatever that might mean).[599]

In addition, it is politically significant that the Chinese Azharites, unlike the peripatetic Ma Dexin, traveled directly to Egypt at the beginning of their studies and returned directly to China at the end, with only very short stops in between in port cities such as Aden, Colombo,

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[598] Chen, "Islam's Loneliest Cosmopolitan."

[599] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 25.

Singapore, or Hong Kong (on the other hand, it is also politically significant that they still managed to meet during those brief transfers with friends they had met in Cairo).

Pang's description of the preparations for the sixth delegation provides a detailed picture of the selection process that had developed by the late 1930s. Although Mustafa al-Maraghi, the new Sheikh al-Azhar from 1935, had originally refused to accept additional Chinese delegations, al-Azhar eventually provided a quota of twenty students for the sixth delegation, to be drawn from the most promising students at Chengda. Due to the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45), breaking out just as the sixth delegation was being formed, only fifteen of these slots could be filled.[600] The selection committee, organized by Ma Songting and consisting of Wang Jingzhai and other prominent imams from northern China, required certain qualifications based on guidelines from al-Azhar: namely, that the students believe in Islam, that they possess "suitable proficiency" in Arabic, that they be graduates of senior high school or a high-level teacher-training institution, that they provide a diploma, and that they pass a medical examination.[601] Significantly, available original documents from al-Azhar showing the requirements for foreign students make no mention of "political" qualifications; this portion of the qualification exam was added on the Chinese side. Above and beyond what al-Azhar requested, Chengda also required a list of Arabic classic texts already read; tests of Arabic composition, translation, grammar, and conversation; a test of doctrinal knowledge; tests of Chinese and foreign history and geography; tests of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, and hygiene; an oral interview; a statement of

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[600] Ibid., p. 27; Yufeng Mao, "Selective Learning from the Middle East," in Lipman, ed., *Islamic Thought in China*, p. 149. Interestingly, Pang notes that Shan Kexing and Ma Xiang, two Chengda students who achieved selection and traveled with the group as far as Hong Kong could not participate because they were called back to work at the Gansu Education Bureau.

[601] *Nizam qubul al-ghuraba'* [Regulations on the Admission of Foreign Students]. Azhar Memory.

intended time abroad, from five to eight years; the signed permission of their "head of family"; and a personal photo.[602]

The first delegation of Chinese Azharites arrived in Cairo on 20 December 1931, traveling aboard the *André Lepon*, the same French steamer that had transported the young Deng Xiaoping and Zhou Enlai to France in fall 1920.[603] The four students in this first delegation—Ma Jian, Na Zhong, Lin Zhongming, and Zhang Youcheng—all came from Yunnan.[604] Muslims had long played a special role in Yunnan's history: in 1273, Qubilai Khan appointed Sayyid 'Ajall Shams al-Din of Bukhara as its governor, at which time many Muslims settled in the province, which had never before been part of "China."[605] The Muslim-dominated trade routes in tea and other goods that connected Yunnan to Burma, India, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean meant that Yunnan, despite being landlocked, was in more regular contact with the outside Islamic world than most other regions of China, and specifically with the same maritime networks to which China's urban coastal Muslims would also be drawn in the twentieth century. This dynamic reached a new milestone in 1930, when the Yunnan Islamic Progress Association (*Yunnan huijiao cujinhui*) contacted al-Azhar asking if it could send them a student delegation, to which al-Azhar agreed.

Sha Guozhen (1884-1970), director of pedagogy at Kunming's Mingde High School (*Mingde zhongxue*), affiliated with the Yunnan Islamic Progress Association, led this first student delegation and became director of the Chinese *riwaq* at al-Azhar until Pang Shiqian took

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[602] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, pp. 23-25.

[603] Benjamin Yang, *Deng: A Political Biography* (M.E. Sharpe, 1998; Routledge, 2015), Ch. 3.

[604] At this point, Ma Jian was studying at the Shanghai Islamic Normal School, but his hometown was Mengzi, Yunnan.

[605] Jackie Armijo, "Shams al-Din."

over the position in 1941. Sha's generation of Yunnanese Muslim scholars had studied in a new-style madrasa system created by Ma Dexin's lead disciple, Ma Lianyuan (1841-1903), who returned to Yunnan in 1872 after making the Hajj, just as the Panthay Rebellion was ending, and for several years proceeded to reform Yunnan's scripture-hall education system "with great success."[606] The Yunnan Islamic Progress Association emerged out of this institutional framework and ideological orientation. After the Qing's defeat of the rebellion's two independent Muslim states and its massacre of thousands of Yunnan's Muslims, Ma Lianyuan and his associates had little choice but to focus on non-subversive pursuits such as education reform. The Yunnanese Chinese Azharites were direct inheritors of this legacy.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the first delegation from Chengda, and the second overall, was delivered by Ma Songting and Zhao Zhenwu during their journey to Egypt, arriving in December 1932. Its members were Han Hongkui, Wang Shiming, Jin Diangui, Ma Jinpeng, and Zhang Bingduo. The third, arriving in March 1934, came again from the Mingde High School in Yunnan, and consisted of Na Xun (brother of Na Zhong), Ma Junwu, and Lin Xinghua. The fourth, arriving in May 1934, was from the Shanghai Islamic Normal School, and consisted of Jin Zichang, Ding Zhongming, Hu Enjun, Lin Xingzhi, and Ma Youlian.

Several of these figures were superlative in their intellectual production as authors and translators. Ma Jian was perhaps the most prolific. He published well over one hundred Chinese articles in *Yuehua*, *Yisilan xuesheng zazhi* (the periodical of the Shanghai Islamic Normal School), and other periodicals, both while in China and while in Cairo. In Cairo, he also

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[606] Gao Fayuan and Yao Jide, eds., *Zhongguo xuesheng liuxue aiji 80 zhounian jinian wenji* [*Essays Commemorating the Eightieth Anniversary of the Chinese Muslim Student Delegations to Egypt*] (Kunming: Yunnan UP, 2011), pp. ii-iii. Ma Lianyuan died in Kanpur, India, teaching there for a time while intending to make another Hajj (in his sixties). His tomb still exists in Kanpur.

translated the *Analects* of Confucius into Chinese, published in Arabic in the journal *al-Fath* in the mid-1930s. *Al-Fath* also published a book based on Ma Jian's 1934 well-attended lectures on Islam in China (see below). Ma also translated T.J. de Boer's *History of Philosophy in Islam* (1901), Hussein al-Jisr's *al-Risala al-hamidiyya fi haqiqat al-diyana al-Islamiyya* (*A Hamidian Tract on Islam's Basis in Fact*), Muhammad 'Abduh's *Risalat al-tawhid* (*Treatise on the Doctrine of God's Unicity*), and 'Abduh's *al-Islam wa-l-Nasraniyya ma'a-l-'ilm wa-l-madaniyya* (*Islam and Christianity Compared in Learning and Urbanity*) into Chinese. Ma's most notable achievement, however, was his complete translation of the Quran into Chinese, the first Chinese version to be based primarily on the Arabic original, published in 1946.

Ma Jian's colleagues from the first four delegations undertook projects of similar scope and ambition. Na Zhong translated Ahmed Amin's (1886-1954) eight-volume history of the Arabs and Islam, *Fajr al-Islam* (*The Dawn of Islam*, 1928), *Duha al-Islam* (*The Forenoon of Islam*, 1933-36), and *Zuhr al-Islam* (*The High Noon of Islam*, 1945-53), from Arabic to Chinese as *Alabo-Yisilan wenhua shi* (*The History of Arab-Islamic Civilization*). He also translated Phillip K. Hitti's *History of the Arabs* (*Alabo tongshi*). His brother Na Xun, meanwhile, translated the *Thousand and One Nights* into Chinese (*Yi qian yi ye*). Finally, Ma Jinpeng, introduced in Chapter Three as the translator of Sheikh Muhammad Farid Wajdi's "scientific exegetical" writings on the medical benefits of fasting, was also the translator of the *Rihla* of Ibn Battuta (1304-69), a work of special significance given that the famous traveler spent considerable time in China, commented on its Muslim populations, and preferred to live in Muslim quarters while there.[607] Between these three individuals and the works they translated, the dual emphasis on literature and history stands out, as does the contrast between the Arabo-

[607] Dunn, *Ibn Battuta*.

centric (Na Zhong/Ahmed Amin/Phillip Hitti, Ma Junwu/Taha Hussein) versus trans-Asian (Ma Jinpeng/Ibn Battuta) conceptions of Islamic history.

As already indicated, Hai Weiliang (1912-?) of Hunan, who arrived relatively unannounced in February 1935 as the one-person "fifth delegation," was unique among this already remarkable group—probably the first Chinese Muslim since Ma Dexin to travel and study in both India and Egypt. While still a teenager studying Islamic classics in Shanghai, Hai joined a delegation departing by steamship for the Hajj. Rather than returning to China, he disembarked in Calcutta, where a Medinan imam found him room and board at an inn across from one of the large mosques. Hai soon moved to Delhi and audited classes at the Jamia Millia Islamia (founded in 1920 by Indian Muslim leaders), supported by university director Dr. Zakir Hussain Khan (*Al-Fath* 565: 20). Teaching himself English and Urdu, Hai enrolled at Aligarh, where he wrote a thesis on Sun Yat-sen's "Three Principles of the People." Nearing age twenty, Hai moved again from Delhi to Lucknow to study at the Nadwat al-'Ulama, founded in 1894 and committed to teaching the orthodox Islamic sciences exclusively in Arabic. In Lucknow, Hai began to publish essays on contemporary Islamic-world politics in *Yuehua* and slightly later in *al-Fath* (1926-48) under his Arabic name, Badr al-Din al-Sini. At the same time, he produced a book-length study in Urdu entitled *The Chinese Muslims* (*Chini-Musalman*, 1935), under the equivalent name Badruddin Chini.[608] Hai departed India in 1934 and joined his Chinese colleagues at al-Azhar in Cairo, studying philosophy,[609] history, and Arabic, while also continuing to submit to *Yuehua* and *al-Fath*. Hai's arrival independent of a planned government-

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[608] Badruddin Chini [a.k.a. Hai Weiliang], *Chini Musalman* [*Chinese Muslims*] (1935). This Urdu text was endorsed by the leading Nadwa scholars Sayyid Sulayman al-Nadwi and Mas'ud 'Ali al-Nadwi.

[609] In this context, the Chinese term *zhexue*, usually signifying "philosophy," may refer to "theology" i.e. *usul al-din*, though the modern field of "philosophy," both Islamic and otherwise, was also offered at al-Azhar and required for students in the Faculty of Theology.

sponsored delegation caused some administrative confusion at al-Azhar, delaying his stipend disbursement. Sha Guozhen wrote promptly and assertively to Muhammad al-Ahmadi al-Zawahiri, Sheikh al-Azhar at the time, to request that Hai receive an allowance "without differentiation between him and the Chinese students who have arrived before him…[to be processed] as soon as possible."[610] While at al-Azhar, Hai conducted research for his Arabic magnum opus *al-'Alaqat bayn al-'Arab wa-l-Sin*, based on the work *Arab o Hind ke Ta'alluqaat* (*Relations between the Arabs and India*) by the Nadwa scholar Sayyid Sulayman al-Nadwi.[611] The work was eventually published in Cairo in 1950, and seven years later appeared in Urdu as *Chin o Arab ke Ta'alluqaat*.

Known as the "Farouq delegation," the sixth and final Chinese Azharite delegation was led by Pang Shiqian and consisted of fifteen students from Chengda. Apart from Pang himself, the members of this delegation were not quite as distinguished as the earlier Chinese Azharites, but they nevertheless carried on the same types of work.[612]

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[610] Ibrahim Sha Guozhen to Shiekh Muhammad al-Ahmadi al-Zawahiri, "Khitab 'ila sheikh al-jami' al-Azhar min sheikh riwaq al-Sin b-istihqaq al-talib Badr al-Din al-Sini min i'ana shahriyya [Letter to the Sheikh al-Azhar from the Sheikh of the Chinese Riwaq Regarding Confirmation of Enrollment and Monthly Stipend for the Student Badr al-Din al-Sini]" (March 1935), accessed through www.alazharmemory.eg.

[611] Sayyid Sulayman al-Nadwi, *'Arab wa Hind key ta'alluqat* [*Relations between the Arabs and India*] (A'zamgarh, 1979).

[612] Ma Jigao of Sichuan, for example, translated some Chinese literary works and children's stories for *al-Thaqafa*, owned and published by Ahmed Amin. Ma Hongyi of Shanxi, meanwhile, focused on the study and translation of Hadith, as discussed in Chapter One.

In addition to the thirty-five Chinese Muslims at al-Azhar, Pang's *Nine Years in Egypt* lists a group of eleven "Xinjiang classmates" as also present in Cairo, arriving between February 1940 and December 1945. The "sending institution" for the first four is given as the "Bombay Xinjiang Fellow Provincials Association" (*Mengmai Xinjiang tongxianghui*), which the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation had made contact with in September 1938 (see Chapter Four). Unfortunately, like Xue Wenbo, Pang did not provide the English or "Turki" name of this group.

The Xinjiang group included one female, Khadija, noted as being the wife of a student named Qasim; by contrast, as far as we know, the Chinese Muslims as well as the other Xinjiang students did not travel with any family members. Many did eventually have spouses and children, but most were in their early twenties at the time of their studies in Cairo, and probably still single.

Pang Shiqian also stands out among the Chinese Azharites. An imam from the old Muslim village of Sangpo, Henan, Pang was an instructor at Chengda and a regular contributor to *Yuehua* from its first issues in 1929. Years before he traveled to Egypt himself, Pang published translations in *Yuehua* of Azhar Sheikh Muhammad al-Khidr Hussein's "History of Islam." Once in Cairo, Pang enrolled in al-Azhar's Faculty of Law (*Kulliyyat al-sharia*). In summer 1939, he and Ma Jian led the anti-Japanese "Chinese Islamic Hajj Delegation" discussed in Chapter Four. In 1940, Pang was appointed lecturer in al-Azhar's "Chinese Culture Lecture Series," which he described as "the first series of its kind on China anywhere in the Islamic world."[613] Pang became head of the Chinese Azharite delegations in 1941, and head of the Chinese *riwaq* after Sha Guozhen returned to China. In addition, he served as a "consultant on Eastern affairs" for King Farouq I, who again was highly involved in al-Azhar's affairs and provided the stipends for the sixth Chinese Azharite delegation. Finally, Pang came to know Hassan al-Banna of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (*Jama'at al-ikhwan al-muslimin*), probably through Azhar sheikhs involved in the Brotherhood, such as Muhammad al-Khidr Hussein, whose abovementioned work Pang translated. Pang eventually became a member of the Brotherhood's Islamic World Outreach Division (*Qism al-ittisal bi-l-'alam al-islami*), and, at al-Banna's invitation, the author of the Division's first publication, *al-Sin wa-l-Islam* (*China and Islam*, 1945). After returning to China, Pang also published *Heping zhi shiming* (*The Mission of Peace*, 1948), a Chinese translation of Azhar Sheikh Yusuf al-Dijwi's apologetic work, *Risalat al-salam wa rusul al-Islam* (literally, "the message of peace and the prophets of Islam"), as well as the memoir *Aiji jiunian* (*Nine Years in Egypt*, 1950), containing notes on al-Azhar and the Chinese Azharites, the journey back to China from Egypt, and reflections on various issues

[613] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 31.

related to Egypt, Islam, China, and Islam in China, including affirmations of core principles and polemics of Islamic modernism.

One purpose of the Chinese Azharites' Chinese articles and Arabic-to-Chinese and English-to-Chinese translations was to make a more complete picture of Islam accessible to Chinese Muslims in China, who were generally more likely to be literate in Chinese than in Arabic. Another purpose, however, was to make Islam more legible to non-Muslim Chinese, both state and society—a task accomplished in part by asserting the commensurability of Arab-Islamic and Chinese "civilizations." The fact that many of the Chinese Azharites' translations were published by the Commercial Press (*Shangwu yinshuguan*) of Shanghai, China's largest and most prestigious publishing house, evinces this latter motive.[614] Meanwhile, the Chinese Azharites' Arabic articles and Chinese-to-Arabic translations were intended to inform Arabic-speaking audiences about China and Islam in China, topics of considerable curiosity for certain audiences and prominent thinkers. Having finally made sustained contact with Muslims outside China, the Chinese Azharites wanted to ensure that they were not forgotten.

Other Chinese Azharites followed alternative but equally prominent paths in diplomacy. Wang Shiming of Tianjin, a student from Chengda, was appointed as the GMD Ministry of Foreign Affairs' first consul-general to Saudi Arabia, stationed in Jeddah during the war (see Chapter Four). Ding Zhongming also worked as a GMD diplomat and eventually became Taiwan's ambassador to Libya. Despite his unique background, Hai Weiliang was also recruited by the GMD Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the war, stationed first in Tehran (1942-1947),

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[614] The Chinese Azharites pursued publication deals with the Commercial Press even though their coreligionists had earlier accused it of printing erroneous information about Islam: there was in fact no contradiction here, however, for elite Chinese Muslims did not want institutions such as the Commercial Press to say nothing about Islam, but rather to help them propagate what they saw as the correct understanding of it.

then in New Delhi (1947-1949). After the formation of the PRC, Hai continued to serve for three more decades as a Taiwanese diplomat, rarely spending much time there before his retirement in 1988.[615]

Others still served in domestic positions in the GMD government and Muslim national associations during wartime. Zhang Bingduo (1915-2004) of Henan, a Chengda student from the second delegation, returned to China in 1938 after six years in Cairo. According to an interview with Zhang's son, the internationally recognized artist Zhang Hongtu, Zhang Bingduo joined other Muslim students in Chongqing, where he "broadcast to the world in Arabic about the Japanese invasion." After that, the elder Zhang moved to Pingliang, Gansu—familiar from Chapter Two—where his grandfather Zhang Wenzheng had owned a fur and leather business. By this point, Da Pusheng's Pingliang school had been nominally converted to state-run status, but it retained many of its Muslim instructors and much of its original Islamic curriculum. For the next several years, Zhang taught, translated, authored a book on Hadith, and helped establish new-style schools for Muslims around Pingliang, in Ningxia, and south to Guilin, focusing on promoting Arabic instruction. Hongtu, the second of his five children, was born at Pingliang in 1943. During the Chinese Civil War, Zhang continued moving the family from Pingliang to Shanghai, Suzhou, Nanjing, and Zhengzhou (an important city from which modernist Muslims mobilized educational reform efforts, and where Pang Shiqian spent some time). He also completed the Hajj twice during this period. Despite considering escape in 1949, Zhang was persuaded to stay in China.[616]

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[615] Han Haichao and Ma Changxin, "Zhuming huizu xuezhe Hai Weiliang [The Famous Hui Scholar Hai Weiliang]," *Alabo shijie* [*The Arab World*] 2 (1993): pp. 58-60; Documents relating to some of Hai's diplomatic activities in the second half of his career can be found in Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection (Asia-Pacific), Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives 020-010608-0002.

[616] Jerome Silbergeld, "Zhang Hongtu: The Art of Straddling Boundaries," http://www.momao.com/reading_bib.htm. Says a "Chinese Muslim professor" persuaded him to stay. This could

Some questions about the Chinese Azharites' daily lives in Cairo are warranted. One concerns language difficulties. While it would appear, as mentioned above, that the Chinese Azharites did not receive specific training in Egyptian colloquial Arabic, Pang does not mention difficulties of communication in his memoir, nor does he discuss the differences between colloquial (*'ammiyya*) versus formal Arabic (*fusha*)—a ubiquitous discussion point for non-native students of Arabic in more recent times. Another question concerns the Chinese Azharites' daily routines. They appear to have generally stayed in the vicinity of al-Azhar. They did make trips to the pyramids and even to a farm in the Nile Delta, but such excursions were probably carefully planned; solitary or spontaneous exploration of the city would almost certainly have been discouraged, as well as dis-incentivized by the students' modest stipends.

A third question concerns racial perceptions and misperceptions, and the degree of the Chinese Azharites' openness to Egyptians and other non-Chinese acquaintances, and vice versa. In general, one expects that some occasional misunderstandings must have occurred, though if so, Pang does not emphasize them in *Aiji jiunian*. On the contrary, Pang states that the Chinese Azharites befriended and worked with colleagues from multiple countries at al-Azhar. *Aiji jiunian* mentions that on his way back to China in 1946, Pang visited Nu'man, who had been at al-Azhar until three years before that and was now appointed minister of education in Yemen.[617] Later in the journey, Pang met with Tan Sri Hajj Hassan Yunus (1907-68), the future Mufti of Johor, whom he had befriended at al-Azhar.[618] While reports of overt racial tension or hierarchy

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have been Pang Shiqian, Ma Jian, or Bai Shouyi, all of whom were in Beijing at the time, but this cannot be proven with the available sources.

[617] It is unclear who this actually is. Al-Azhar's Yemen rosters from 1936 list an 'Abdullah 'Umar Nu'man, but this may not be the same.

[618] Pang refers to the individual only as "Hassan," but context confirms it must be the future Mufti of Johor.

are difficult to find in Pang's *Aiji jiunian*, it does seem that a special connection formed between the Chinese Azharites and the Jawi Azharites, due to perceived affinities of culture and geography, and perceived discrepancies between them and their Arab and Egyptian hosts. Such perceptions in turn owed themselves to Arabs' superiority in the Arabic language, their status as the world's first Muslims, and to nationalism.

For example, at one point Pang observes that Mustafa al-Maraghi, Sheikh al-Azhar from 1935 to 1945, "was a nationalist (*guojia zhuyi*, "nation-statist"), and therefore was not overly attentive to the affairs of foreign students."[619] To be fair, however, Pang recalls elsewhere in *Nine Years in Egypt* a reasonably in-depth interaction with al-Maraghi discussing the Chinese Azharites' post-graduation plans. Furthermore, in July 1935, not long after assuming the position of Sheikh al-Azhar, al-Maraghi had in fact published a message in the Egyptian daily *al-Ahram* responding to a letter from none other than Da Pusheng. Titled "From the Sheikh al-Azhar to the Muslims of China," the message noted that "An organization of the people of China recently sent a letter to the Sheikh al-Azhar, from the head of one of the Islamic associations there, Mr. Nur Muhammad [Da Pusheng], in which they describe some of the disagreements over *madhhabs* and jurisprudential viewpoints that are afflicting them, and requesting from his excellency that he might do them the honor of hosting additional official study delegations at al-Azhar."[620] The first five Chinese Azharite delegations had arrived during the tenure of al-Maraghi's predecessor, Muhammad al-Ahmadi al-Zawahiri.[621] Perhaps Da's letter was intended to test the waters with the new Sheikh al-Azhar, as much as to convey information about Islam in China.

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[619] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, pp. 76-77.

[620] "Min Shaykh al-jami' al-Azhar 'ila muslimi al-Sin [From the Sheikh al-Azhar to the Muslims of China]," *al-Ahram*, 21 July 1935, p. 9.

[621] Zhao, *Xixing riji*, mentions some direct interactions with al-Zawahiri (who happens to have been the grandfather of Ayman al-Zawahiri).

In sum, study at al-Azhar was the highest level of Islamic education the Chinese Azharites could achieve—far superior to anything available in China. Al-Azhar's reformed system of education allowed the Chinese Azharites to study Islam with unprecedented systematicity. The Chinese Azharites had tremendous respect for Egypt's education system compared to China's, especially for Muslims. In Pang's words,

> Of all the world's examples of Islamic education, that of China's Muslims must be the most backward. In Egypt, by contrast, twenty percent of people receive some form of education. In Syria, it is forty percent. Among Chinese generally, the number is ten to twelve percent; for China's Muslims it is five to six percent. This is for primary education. As for higher education, it's a non-starter…The works of Egypt and India's religious scholars are guides to Muslims all over the world in religious thought. The sustenance for the religious spirit of the Muslims of my country, China, is terribly lacking. From the earliest Chinese translations of Islamic texts to the present, only four or five hundred volumes have been produced—an average of one per year. Today, in all of China, how many are fully versed in the religious sciences? Muslims' cultural level has risen in recent years, but they need spiritual sustenance. Our rate of production has been very low. I hope our friends in all corners will help us with this work!"[622]

"China" in Arabic-Islamic Thought, and "Egypt" in Chinese Muslim Thought

The Chinese Azharites did indeed make friends "from all corners" in Cairo. At al-Azhar, they neither lived in a vacuum nor merely studied Islam in the formal sense. Rather, they also learned new ways of speaking about Islam, about China, and about current global affairs conditioned by their Egyptian environment. It would have been impossible to study up to nine years at al-Azhar, let alone live that long in Cairo, without absorbing something from this larger atmosphere. At the same time, the relatively established presence of a large group of Chinese Muslims in Cairo provided answers to a question that had long been taking shape among intellectuals writing in the Arab press: What is China? And who are the Chinese Muslims? Thus the sophisticated self-

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[622] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, pp. 17-18. Pang also expressed admiration for Lucknow and Deoband. Ironically, the Chinese term in the last sentence of this passage is 多斯弟们—probably from Persian *doost*, "friend."

narratives that Chinese Muslim elites had wielded in China came to serve the new purpose of explaining China and Chinese Islam to Arabic speakers. This new discursive process both further opened up and further reinforced the ethos of transnationalist integrationism.

The ways in which Arab thinkers answered the two interrelated questions of China and Islam in China underwent three discernible phases from the late nineteenth century through the Second World War. First, there was a relatively long "Orientalized" phase from the late nineteenth century through the First World War, characterized by limited knowledge, a sense of China's remoteness and mysteriousness, and an inchoate but emerging Arab sense of identification with China. Second, there was a more universalist, nationalist, and modernist phase during the 1920s and early 1930s, characterized by Egyptians and Chinese viewing each other as fellow nation-states pursuing progress in the shadow of imperialism and in the wake of revolution. Third, there was a highly complex and protracted "civilizational-historicist" phase from the late 1920s through the 1950s, characterized by an upsurge in mutual knowledge and direct contact; by Islamic, Easternist, and Arabist inflections; by discourses of florescence or "golden ages" versus "decline"; and by forms of "re-Orientalization" in which Eastern nation-states were seen as the inheritors of "ancient civilizations."

These three phases of Arab views of China closely paralleled the evolving question of Egyptian and Arab identity itself. This was arguably one expression of a broader phenomenon known then and now as the *nahda*, or "awakening," a new era of translation, literary production, and expanding mass media that sought to articulate and rearticulate the modern identities of Arabic-speaking societies in the context of anticolonialism and rapid socioeconomic change.[623]

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[623] Studies of the nahda and its relationship to Arab and territorial nationalisms are numerous and cannot all be cited here. Some representative works include Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (Oxford UP, 1962; Cambridge UP, 1983). Rashid Khalidi, Lisa Anderson, Muhammad Muslih, and Reeva S. Simon, eds.,

From the rise of the Arabic press in the last quarter of the nineteenth century through the First World War, the uncertain fate of the Ottoman Empire loomed large for Arabic-speaking intellectuals. Thus, during the first phase, such intellectuals viewed China as an old empire similarly besieged.[624] Attention shifted in the second phase, as Egypt's nationalist movement expanded following Ottoman collapse and the 1919 Revolution, producing a new debate

The Origins of Arab Nationalism (New York: Columbia UP, 1991); James Jankowski and Israel Gershoni, eds., *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East* (New York: Columbia UP, 1997); Elizabeth Suzanne Kassab, *Contemporary Arabic Thought: Cultural Critique in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Columbia UP, 2010); Shaden M. Tageldin, *Disarming Words: Empire and the Seductions of Translation in Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Stephen Sheehi, "Towards a Critical Theory of *al-Nahdah*: Epistemology, Ideology, and Capital," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 43 (2012): pp. 269-98; Jens Hanssen and Max Weiss, *Arabic Thought beyond the Liberal Age: Towards an Intellectual History of the Nahda* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2016).

[624] This was especially the case in Shakib Arslan's multi-part essay "Mustaqbal al-Sin [The Future of China]," which appeared in the journal *al-Muqtataf* in 1900-01. On *al-Muqtataf* generally, see Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East: A History* (Oxford UP, 1995), pp. 36, 53-54. On Arslan generally, see Cleveland, *Islam Against the West*.

"China" in classical Arabic thought often stood, in a manner somewhere between the literal and the figurative, for the limits of the known world. Hence the popularity of the Hadith "Seeketh knowledge even unto China" (*utlub al-'ilm walaw bi-l-Sin*) even despite its doubted authenticity. The use of the hypothetical conditional particle *walaw* in the phrase (literally, "even if it were in China") concedes that "China" may be unreachable. The fact that many Arabs empirically did reach China as far back as the early 'Abbasid (750-1258) or mid-Tang (618-907), that many more were transferred to Beijing following the Mongols' conquest of Baghdad in 1258, or that a handful of Chinese Muslims had traveled to the Arab lands before modern times apparently did not shake the general impression of China's foreignness and inaccessibility. The journeys of Sulayman al-Tajir or Ibn Battuta may have resulted in some degree of familiarity, but only against a backdrop of unfamiliarity. On Chinese and Islamic societies' premodern knowledge of one another, see Hyunhee Park, *Mapping the Chinese and Islamic Worlds: Cross-Cultural Exchange in Pre-modern Asia* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2012).

China remained unknown for Arabic-speaking audiences into the late nineteenth century, continuing to appear as a symbol for the farthest frontier of the Islamic world. Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh spoke of China in such terms in *al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa*, the "pan-Islamist" journal published in Paris: Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh, "al-Wahda al-Islamiyya [Islamic Unity]," *al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* [The Firmest Bond], p. 8. 'Abduh painted China in similar terms elsewhere, for example in Muhammad 'Abduh, "Intishar al-Islam [The Spread of Islam]," *al-Manar*, May 1918, p. 81; originally published in *Risalat al-Tawhid* [*Treatise on the Doctrine of God's Unicity*].

During the first phase of Arab views of China (1870s-1918), several other voices had grown interested in China and Islam in China for multiple reasons. This included the Levantine Christians, who were especially interested in the history of Nestorian Christianity in China, as well as Muslim writers who were increasingly interested in anti-imperialism in China as well as Islam in China. See for example As'ad Khalil Daghir, "Saur al-Sin al-'azim [The Great Wall of China]," *al-Muqtataf*, 1 November 1889, pp. 92-94; "Al-Mas'ala al-Siniyya [The China Question]," *al-Manar*, 1315/1898, pp. 24-25.Luis Shaykhu al-Yasu'I, "Al-Sin wa-l-mas'ala al-siniyya [China and the China Question]," *al-Mashriq*, 15 September 1900, p. 850; 'Inayatullah Ahmadi, "Ahwal Muslimi al-Sin: Jam'iyya islamiyya fi Bikin [Conditions of the Muslims of China: An Islamic Association in Peking]," *al-Manar*, 11 October 1912, pp. 790-99.

See also Michael Keevak, *The Story of a Stele: China's Nestorian Monument and its Reception in the West, 1625-1916* (Hong Kong UP, 2008), pp. 102-09.

emerged about the nature of Egyptianness.[625] Through the 1920s, many of Egypt's leading intellectuals argued that Egyptian culture was fundamentally tied to the Mediterranean and Europe, and that the nation's destiny ought to be understood with respect to a unique, territorial identity and relatively secular, Westernizing principles. Accordingly, Egyptian and Arab China observers in this period tended to view it as an old society undergoing transformation into a modern nation-state via an equivalent process of revolution and "awakening" (indeed, Chinese intellectuals saw their country's trajectory in similar terms at this time).

Secular, Westernizing, territorial nationalism failed to resonate with large portions of the Egyptian people, however, and as in other colonized and semi-colonized societies, the question of how to become stronger and politically independent without losing sight of "culture" and "tradition"—modernizing without Westernizing—took center stage. Many Egyptians alleged, for example, that Turkey had sacrificed too much of its culture in the quest for progress, and that an alternative model was needed. Moreover, many Egyptians saw a role for Islam in daily life and in the character of the nation-state, expressed above all in the wide appeal and rapid rise of the

[625] I do not mean to elide Egyptianness and Arabness here. At the same time, Egypt figures prominently in the sources (especially after the First World War), and one could make the case that Egyptian intellectuals saw greater similarities between China and themselves than did Arab writers elsewhere.

Characteristic writings from this second phase are, for example, Hussein Labib, "Tarikh al-ta'lim wa-l-tahdhib fi-l-Sin [History of Education and Training in China]," *al-Muqtataf*, 1 June 1927, p. 659; Duktur Tshin [Chen], "Al-Wataniyya al-Siniyya wa ghayatuha [The Aims of Chinese Nationalism]," *al-Majalla al-Jadida* (November 1929), pp. 76-77.

Other Egyptian articles on China focused on the themes of "revolution" and "awakening": for example, Ahmad al-Mukhtar's translation of an obscure English article, published in *al-'Usur* in January 1930 under the title "China's Intellectual Awakening" (*Nahdat al-Sin al-fikriyya*). This translation introduced Arabic audiences to the thought of Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, Liang Shuming, and Chen Duxiu, including Chen's accusations that Confucianism was merely "illusions and superstitions"—translated as *al-awham wa-l-'ibadat wa-l-khurafat*, labels also used by Islamic modernists to condemn Sufism, and by Arab secularists to condemn religion generally. Ahmad al-Mukhtar, "Nahdat al-Sin al-fikriyya: hiya al-asl fi thawratiha al-siyasiyya [China's Intellectual Awakening: The Root of its Political Revolution]," *al-'Usur*, 1 January 1930.

Ayalon describes *al-Majalla al-Jadida* as one of several publications founded in the mid- to late 1920s, also including Khayri Sa'id's *al-Fajr* (1925-27) and Isma'il Mazhar's *al-'Usur* (1927-30), that "advocated a secularist 'Egyptianist' orientation" and "debated issues of religion vs. secularism, Egyptian identity ('Pharaonicism') vs. Arabism, territorial vs. pan-regional nationalism, and democracy vs. dictatorship, reacting to developments in other countries in the region and elsewhere and examining possible implications for their own society." Ayalon, *The Press*, p. 81.

Muslim Brotherhood. They also felt connected by language, culture, and interest to the Arab countries, a sentiment heightened in particular by the case of the Palestinians. In addition to being Muslims and Arabs, many Egyptians also felt that they belonged to an even broader community of peoples known as the "East" or "Easterners," old and culturally rich societies that had recently fallen under European colonialism and behind European advancements. These positions, maintained especially by Egypt's middle and lower classes, grew more prominent in the 1930s when Egypt was hit by the Great Depression. In this context, otherwise secular, Westernist, territorial-nationalist Egyptian intellectuals largely embraced Islam, Arabism, and Easternism in their literary production.[626]

In other words, in the early 1930s, Egyptian intellectuals, and to an extent Egyptian society at large, were undergoing a shift in ideological orientation from a relatively secular, territorial, European-facing, "Egyptianist" nation-state nationalism to a more expansive, Easternist, and Islamically inflected Egyptian nationalism. To varying degrees, notable Egyptian thinkers who had supported the Egyptianist orientation in the 1920s, such as Muhammad Husayn Haykal, now embraced the Islamo-Easternist one. This shift reflected a number of developments in interwar Egypt, most importantly the rise of a new, middle-class mass audience that Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski termed the "New Effendiyya." This segment of the population was literate and politically engaged, but less Westernized than the Egyptianist intellectuals, skeptical of the role of traditional elites, hard-pressed by the Great Depression, and in favor of a more prominent role for Islam in Egyptian public life. The emergence of this social group

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[626] Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*; Charles D. Smith, *Islam and the Search for Social Order in Modern Egypt: A Biography of Muhammad Husayn Haykal* (Albany: SUNY, 1983). See also Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (New York: Oxford UP, 1969); Beth Baron, *The Orphan Scandal: Christian Missionaries and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2014).

manifested itself in new periodicals and associations, above all in the rise and rapid expansion of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, founded in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna. The New Effendiyya saw Egypt's destiny not with Europe or the Mediterranean, but with the Arab countries, the Islamic world, and the "East," ancient and wise, but recently fallen under the yoke of European colonialism.

These dynamics, too, shaped Egyptian and Arab views of China, which was now recast not simply as a fellow modernizing nation-state, but as a fellow ancient civilization morally superior to the imperialist-colonialist West. A tension remained in Egyptian and Arab views of China, however—one that echoed the tensions between the territorial versus Islamo-Easternist visions of Egyptian identity. China could certainly be seen as a fellow nation-state (equal but separate, one might say) or as a fellow civilization (similar but separate). On such bases, furthermore, China might be deemed similar to the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, the Arab world, or even the "Islamic world." The fact remained, however, that China was also organically connected to the Islamic *umma*. This was true by virtue of China's large Muslim population, despite its never having properly belonged to the *Dar al-Islam*. How should Egyptian and Arab intellectuals account for the fact that Muslims lived in China in such great numbers, and for so many centuries? What would the fact of the Chinese Muslims' existence mean for one's definitions of "Islam" and "China"?

The Chinese Azharites arrived in Cairo at the precise moment when the tensions between narrow territorial nationalism and broad supranational nationalism were coming to the fore, both in Egyptian and Arabs questions about themselves generally, and their questions about China specifically. The Chinese Azharites certainly fit in most naturally with Cairo's Islamo-Easternists, such as Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib's *al-Fath* circle or the Muslim Brotherhood, who

arguably sought to use them to show their "pan-Islamic" credentials. Yet they also neither shunned nor were shunned by figures considered to be relatively secular, "Egyptianist" Egyptian nationalists such as Taha Hussein. In short, the Chinese Azharites' presence helped answer some of the long-standing questions of Egyptian and Arab thinkers, but at the same time, the tension between territorial versus supranational nationalism they found in Egypt also mirrored the challenges Chinese Muslims faced in China. The question on everyone's mind was whether identities larger than that of the nation-state could coexist with it.

Egypt's emerging Islamo-Easternist orientation was of immediate relevance to the Chinese Azharites. As discussed above, the decade after the First World War had been an exuberant phase of nation-state nationalism and of radical cultural reform movements, both of which vilified the old and exalted the new. The 1930s, by contrast, witnessed a movement away from this universalist-nationalist modernist consensus, instead reviving the notion of "civilization" and respect for the old. By this time, however, the definition of civilization had become more plural: the sense that the world war had broken Europe's monopoly coincided with the argument that the world consisted not of multiple nations on a single scale of Civilization, but that each nation represented different and equally valuable civilizations. In this context, the historical accomplishments of various cultures received renewed attention, and the "ancient wisdom" of figures such as Confucius was celebrated rather than vilified (in fact, Confucius and "Chinese philosophy" were the topic of a two-part essay published by ʻAli al-ʻAnani in the journal *al-Maʻrifa al-Misriyya* in 1932 titled "Chinese Wisdom").[627] As a result, China was to an

[627] ʻAli al-ʻAnani, "al-Hikma al-Siniyya (1) [Chinese Wisdom]," *al-Maʻrifa al-Misriyya*, 1 February 1932, pp. 14-16; ʻAli al-ʻAnani, "al-Hikma al-Siniyya (2): Kunfushiyus [Chinese Wisdom: Confucius]," *al-Maʻrifa al-Misriyya*, 1 March 1932, pp. 329-32. This development in the Arabic press paralleled the re-embrace of Confucius in China rooted ultimately in Chiang Kai-shek's use of classical Chinese culture and Confucian principles as the basis for a cohesive Chinese national identity and as an alternative to Communist ideology.

extent re-Orientalized in the eyes of Arabic-speaking audiences, such that the Chinese Azharites were obliged to explain and represent both China's classical civilization and its modern transformation to those Arabic audiences—ironically, all while they were trying to cultivate themselves as Muslims.

Rashid Rida's *al-Manar* (1898-1935) was one of the most sustained Islamic modernist periodicals of the early twentieth century, and an early and consistent voice for the Islamo-Easternist orientation that gained prominence in the 1930s. That said, *al-Manar*'s attention to China and Islam in China was uneven and perhaps surprisingly sparse in comparison to the periodical's considerable output. As mentioned above, *al-Manar* gave occasional coverage of political events in China from its first year, framed in an anti-imperialist tone, and it also published some translated essays regarding Islam and Muslims in China.[628]

There was one instance in which a Chinese Muslim may have contributed directly to the pages of *al-Manar*. In mid-1930, Rida published a letter in *al-Manar* titled "An Important Letter from China Regarding the Muslims Living There," identifying the author as Uthman bin al-Hajj Nur al-Haqq al-Sini al-Hanafi from Guangdong. Addressing Rida as the editor of *al-Manar* and, erroneously, as "president of the People of the Sunna," the author declared that the Muslims of China are "weak of faith and ignorant of the Islamic sciences, the Quran, and Hadith, and are

[628] Umar Ryad notes that Rida wrote some observations about China in *al-Manar* in 1901 that prefigured Arabic thinkers' later concern with Chinese "civilization": "[Rida] contended that the people of China were not like 'cattle' trampling each other, or like 'fish,' the big eating the small with no restraint. They had a civilization and values of their own; either before or after the existence of the Israelites. They were even more advanced than the Israelites in science, culture, and order, [and] more advanced than the Christians themselves whose religion advanced them in nothing but animosity, hatred, disagreement, discord, war, and murder during the so-called 'Dark Ages,' while the Chinese lived in peace and harmony. The same was true for the Hindus. He argued that there is no harm for Muslims to believe that the Chinese religion and Hinduism were of divine origin, just as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It is not forbidden to believe that God had sent down messengers for those people in order to guide them to 'eternal happiness.' But they intermingled their religions with inherited pagan tendencies, the same as the Christians did with their originally divine and monotheistic religion." Umar Ryad, *Islamic Reformism and Christianity*, pp. 194-95; from *al-Manar*, 4/17 (Sha'ban 1319/November 1901), p. 156.

abandoning prayer and other faithful obligations…most of them do not understand true belief (*iman*), but rather are mere blind imitators of earlier examples (*muqallidun*)." Calling *al-Manar* a "sun whose face we cannot see," the author asked Rida to purchase copies of *al-Manar* to be translated into Chinese. In his response, published together with the original letter, Rida graciously agrees to send copies of *al-Manar* as a "gift among other gifts." He also asks the author to realize that he is not a leader of the Muslim community, and that the community in fact has no leader, the "fault for which lies with them as their current state is one of chaos, though it is hoped that a renewal will take place among them in this age such that order [*nizam*] can be restored."[629] Whether the letter was the authentic composition of a Chinese Muslim or not, its message was generally consistent with what the Chinese Muslims hoped to gain through greater contact with Muslims outside China and especially through study in Cairo.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Rida's *al-Manar* was relatively unusual for its attention to China and Islam in China, exceptions such as Shakib Arslan and the Lebanese Christian notwithstanding. By the early 1930s, however, the rising tide of Islamo-Easternism was bringing attention to China from other corners. For example, the Society of the Eastern Bond (*Jam'iyyat al-Rabita al-Sharqiyya*), a semi-secret organization of prominent Egyptian and Arab figures founded in Cairo in 1928-29, published a journal also titled *The Eastern Bond* (*al-Rabita al-Sharqiyya*, 1928-31) that gave above-average coverage to the affairs of Islamic and Asian countries beyond the Middle East, including China. The Society was an apparently eclectic but relatively conservative collection of prominent Islamic authorities, non-religions intellectuals, Egyptian elites and royalists, and representatives of other Muslim countries. Its nearly thirty

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[629] Uthman bin al-Hajj Nur al-Haqq al-Sini al-Hanafi to Muhammad Rashid Rida, "Risala muhimma min al-sin fi hal man fiha min al-muslimin [An Important Letter from China Regarding the Muslims Living There]," *al-Manar* 31 (al-Muharram 1349/May-June 1930), p. 75.

members included Rashid Rida; Muhammad al-Ahmadi al-Zawahiri, current Sheikh al-Azhar; Mustafa ‘Abd al-Raziq, future Sheikh al-Azhar; Ahmad Shafiq Pasha (1860-1940), the first vice-president of the Egyptian University educated at the Khedival Law School and Sciences-Po, who served as editor of *al-Rabita al-Sharqiyya*; Mansour Fahmy, a French-influenced Egyptian sociologist who had published a study on the condition of women in Islam in 1913. The Society’s administration also included Turkish, Persian, and Coptic “adjutants.” The introduction to the first issue of *al-Rabita al-Sharqiyya* stated: “This is a journal whose title indicates plainly the cause in which it believes, and the end toward which it strives.”[630]

From the early 1930s, “supply and demand” began to meet: the aspirations of Arabic audiences to know more about China and Islam in China increasingly coincided with the Chinese Azharites’ efforts to explain those same topics in Arabic. Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib’s journal *Al-Fath* (1926-48) became one of the earliest Arabic publications to give truly sustained attention to Islam in China and to publish writings by Chinese Muslims (as mentioned in Chapter One, it was also the first Middle Eastern Arabic periodical regularly imported by Chinese Muslims in China). *Al-Fath* described itself as the “Mirror of the Islamic World.” It was an Islamic transnationalist publication par excellence, vocally committed to Islamic unity in broad, political terms.[631] Al-Khatib repeatedly asserted that Islam transcended national and racial boundaries, ubiquitously employing the favorite Quranic refrains of Islamic transnationalists: that “Indeed this, your community, is one community” and “Verily all the believers are brothers.”[632] The journal’s main

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[630] “Al-Rabita al-Sharqiyya [The Eastern Bond],” *al-Rabita al-Sharqiyya*, 1 Jumada al-Ula 1347 [15 October 1928], p. 1.

[631] Lauzière cites it (perhaps somewhat misleadingly) as a chief example of “Islamic nationalism” in the Arabic press, which he clarifies by contrasting it with “territorial-statist nationalism,” meaning it involved “the valorization of a unique Muslim ‘culture’ and a primordial attachment to the *umma* as a whole, with a view to liberating it politically, regardless of how many sovereign states might emerge.” Lauzière, *Making of Salafism*, p. 100.

contributors included a long list of figures known for sharing al-Khatib's Islamic transnationalist priorities: Rashid Rida; Shakib Arslan; Hajj Amin al-Husseini, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, controversial for his eventual Axis connections; Taqi al-Din al-Hilali, the peripatetic and similarly controversial Islamic scholar; 'Umar Tusun, an Egyptian prince who supported the Caliphate movement; Mas'ud 'Alim al-Nadwi, a scholar at the Nadwat al-'Ulama in Lucknow; Hassan al-Banna, founder of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood; and Mustafa al-Sibai, founder of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood. Notably, *Al-Fath* often disputed the sheikhs of al-Azhar, whose journal *Nur al-Islam* gave comparatively less coverage to Muslims outside the Middle East.[633] By contrast, as Zvi Ben-Dor Benite notes, al-Khatib had shown interest in Chinese Islam from an early point, and sustained that interest well into the 1930s.[634] In fact, one could say Chinese Islam functioned as *al-Fath*'s prime symbol for the expansiveness of the Islamic world.

Al-Fath developed particularly close connections to the Chinese Muslims. Ma Jian came into contact with al-Khatib while in Cairo, and published several articles in *al-Fath* under the name Muhammad Makin al-Sini, including an obituary of Ma Fuxiang, a discussion of Islamic education in China, an assessment of the "position of Muslims in China proper (*al-Sin al-asliyya*) toward the revolt in Turkistan, and an overview of the Chinese Islamic Youth Association formed in Beijing in 1929.[635] *Al-Fath* also published Ma's translation of Confucius'

[632] Zhao, *Xixing riji*, p. 54; Quran 21:92, 49:10.

[633] A decline in coverage, however, eventually set in for both *Nur al-Islam* and *al-Fath*. Apart from clear exceptions such as their delegation to India in 1938, l-Azhar was never really concerned with publishing expositions on Muslims' conditions in other countries; rather, they felt (not undeservedly) that al-Azhar's positions on Islamic questions applied equally to all the world's Muslims, and therefore that their writings were intrinsically global. As for *al-Fath*, it was more concerned with showcasing its connections to Muslims from China and Indonesia as an indication of the breadth of its Islamic transnationalism. As tensions grew in Europe and as the British violently suppressed the nationalist revolt in Palestine of 1936-39, however, even *al-Fath* turned its attention away from fully transnational concerns to these more proximate issues.

[634] Benite, "Taking 'Abduh to China," p. 256.

Analects, which notably rendered the Chinese concept of ancestors as "*al-salaf al-salih*"—the term for the "pious forebears," or the earliest generations of Muslims, held by both modernist and conservative Salafis to epitomize their various ideals of thought and practice.[636]

Ma Jian became further involved with al-Khatib when the latter formed the Islamic Consociate Society (*jam'iyyat al-ta'aruf al-islami*) in Cairo in early 1934, headquartered at the same offices as *al-Fath*.[637] One of the Society's goals, stated in Article Two of its charter, was "to improve the bonds of mutual knowledge between the Muslims of the world."[638] The rationale was that if Muslims possessed reliable information about their coreligionists in faraway lands, they would realize that the supranational connections of the *umma* superseded parochial loyalties to one's nation-state. One way the Society intended to realize their goals was by "including members from every Islamic country, *and every country possessing an Islamic minority*, in the Society's center in Cairo."[639] This reference to Muslim-minority countries speaks to Chinese Muslims' deliberate inclusion in the initiative. Before long, Ma Jian was elected one of the ten

[635] Muhammad Makin al-Sini, "A Loss for Muslims in China: General Ma Fuxiang," *al-Fath* Year 7, No. 318, 11 Rajab 1351, pp. 3-4; Muhammad Makin al-Sini, "A Committee to Improve Education for Children of Chinese Muslims," *al-Fath*, Year 8, No. 357, 18 Rabi al-Thani 1352, p. 15; Muhammad Makin al-Sini, "Chinese Turkistan," *al-Fath*, Year 8, No. 375, 26 Shaban 1352 [i.e. 13 December 1933], p. 18; Muhammad Makin al-Sini, "The Chinese Islamic People's Youth Society," *al-Fath*, Year 8, No. 385, 15 Zulqada 1352, p. 15.

[636] Muhammad Makin al-Sini, "The *Analects* of Confucius: Translated for the First Time Directly from Chinese to Arabic," *al-Fath*, Year 9, No. 423, 21 Shaban 1353, pp. 6-7, 11; the translation continued to appear in regular installments until Year 9, No. 445, 13 Safar 1354. Ma Jian also wrote a biography of Confucius to accompany the first installment: Muhammad Makin al-Sini, "Confucius," *al-Fath*, Year 9, No. 423, 21 Shaban 1353, p. 22. The advertisement for the book version, *Kitab al-hiwar li-Kunfushiyus, filusuf al-Sin al-akbar* [*The Book of Dialogues of Confucius, Great Philosopher of China*], appeared on the back cover of *al-Fath*, Year 10, No. 470, 10 Shaban 1354.

[637] *al-Fath* 389 (1934): pp. 9-10, 19.

[638] *al-Fath* 389 (1934): p. 9.

[639] Emphasis added.

inaugural members of the Society's administrative council.[640] Ibrahim Sha Guozhen, head of the Chinese *riwaq* at al-Azhar, also became a member.[641]

Through these connections, Ma Jian gained some celebrity among Cairo's most prominent Islamic transnationalist thinkers and activists. Thanks to Ma's relationship with al-Khatib, the Chinese Muslims finally encountered Rashīd Riḍā in summer 1934, a year before the latter's death, through the good offices of *al-Fath*. The Islamic Consociate Society chose Ma Jian to deliver the first set of lectures in its series on "Islamic issues and facts about Islam."[642] Members of the Islamic Consociate Society attended, as did members of the Society of the Eastern Bond. A recollection of the event published in *al-Fath* stated:

> Mustafa Sabri Efendi, former Sheikh al-Islam of the Ottoman Empire, and Sayyid Muhammad Rashid Rida, were both in attendance…Muhammad Makin al-Sini [Ma Jian] gave his presentation in clear Arabic. When he was done, Rida stood and said 'You have done a truly excellent job. It has been years since I have heard a lecture from which I benefitted as much as I did from this one.'[643]

Ma's lectures were later published as the book *Nazrah jami'a ila tarikh al-Islam fi-l-Sin wa ahwal al-muslimina fiha* ("A Comprehensive Overview of the History of Islam in China and Muslims' Conditions There"), published by al-Khatib's Salafiyya Press in 1935. An

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[640] The inaugural members of the Islamic Consociate Society's Administrative Council were: (1) Mahmud Bey Saalim, former judge in the mixed court of Egypt (2) Dr. Muhammad Hilmi Ahmad, inspector in the Ministry of Information (3) Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib, publisher of *al-Fath* (4) Muhammad Ahmad Abu Zahrah, instructor in the School of Theology [madrasat usul al-din] (5) Muhammad Muhammad al-Surayti, also a school instructor (6) Hussein Muhammad, instructor in the Shubra Secondary School (7) Mr. Muhammad Makin of the Chinese delegation (8) Mr. Abd al-Qahhar Mudakkir of the Jawi delegation (9) Sheikh Qasim Dubracha of the Yugoslav delegation (10) Mr. Zayd Abdullah al-Faruqi of the Indian delegation. Ma Jian, then, was listed first among the foreign members. The inclusion of Chinese, Indonesian, Yugoslav, and Indian Muslims was certainly intended to demonstrate that *al-Fath*'s espoused the broadest possible vision of Islamic transnationalism. "The Islamic Consociate Society," *al-Fath* 8, No. 389, 20 Zulhajja 1352 [4 April 1934], p. 19.

'Abd al-Qahhar Mudakkir (1903-73) soon returned to Java, where he participated in a four-person delegation to Tokyo in 1937 oh behalf of the Madjlis Islam A'laa Indonesia (MIAI), a delegation also including another Jawi Azharite, Farid Ma'ruf. Kramer, *Islam Assembled*, p. 156.

[641] "The Islamic Consociate Society," al-Fath, Year 9, No. 401, 16 Rabi al-Awwal 1353, p. 22.

[642] Makin al-Sini (Ma), *Nazra jami'a*.

[643] *al-Fath* 403 (1934): p. 4.

advertisement of the book in *al-Fath* called Ma Jian an "inquisitive and virtuous scholar" (*al-ʻalim al-fadil al-muhaqqiq*) and even a "perfect Muslim" (*al-muslim al-kamil*).[644] In his foreword to Ma Jian's book, al-Khaṭīb echoed:

> We consider it a tribute to this work that when its author delivered it as a lecture to the Islamic Consociate Association (*Jamʿiyyat al-taʿāruf al-ʾislāmī*) the venerable scholar Sayyid Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā was in attendance, and said that he had not heard such a worthwhile lecture in years, and that he hoped that the Association would continue to provide such enjoyable lectures on various Islamic countries, in which valuable information would be synthesized about Islam and the conditions of Muslims in all countries, amounting to a compendium on those countries that would serve the need of Muslims to know one another, which will lead in turn to even bigger and more enjoyable activities.[645]

Shortly after the publication of Ma's *Nazrah jamiʻa*, *al-Fath* published a letter from Shakib Arslan in Geneva, wishing "blessings to Mr. Makin al-Sini" and complimenting him on his book.[646] Among other things, these vivid exchanges challenge the stereotype that Rashid Rida and others had adopted more of an Arab chauvinist orientation in their later years, at the expense of a more expansive, multiracial vision of Islamic unity. Ma Jian's interactions with al-Khatib, Rida, and Arslan also illustrate the ways in which the Chinese Azharites' aspirations to write themselves into prevailing definitions of the Islamic world coincided with Arabic audiences' desire to know more about China and Islam in China in the context of the newly ascendant Islamo-Easternist orientation.[647]

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[644] al-Fath; Benite, "Taking ʻAbduh to China."

[645] Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib, "Muqqadima [Foreword]," in Muhammad Makin al-Sini (a.k.a. Ma Jian), *Nazra jamiʻa ila tarikh al-Islam fi-l-Sin wa ahwal al-muslimin fiha* [A Comprehensive Overview of the History of Islam in China and the Conditions of Muslims Therein], (Cairo: al-Matbaʻa al-Salafiyya, 1935), p. 3.

[646] Shakib Arslan, "Blessings to Makin al-Sini," *al-Fath*, Year 9, No. 415, 25 Jumada al-Akhira 1353, p. 5.

[647] Influences began to run in the other direction as well: in early 1935, *al-Fath* published a notice that *Yuehua* (i.e. *Nadarat al-hilal*) had "translated the article by the venerable Sheikh Taqi al-Din Hilali titled "Roman History and Arab History." "*Al-Fath*'s Articles in China," *al-Fath*, Year 9, No. 432, 3 Zulqada 1353 [i.e. 6 February 1935], p. 4.

Hai Weiliang was also close to *al-Fath*'s Islamic transnationalist circle. In 1933, even before arriving in Egypt, Hai Weiliang began publishing under the name Badr al-Din al-Sini in both *al-Fath* and in the Jaffa-based daily al-Jami'a al-Islamiyya, owned by Hajj Amin al-Husseini. Hai had no doubt been introduced to these publications while at the Lucknow Nadwa, where they were consumed voraciously. In the meantime, Hai also learned about the Chinese Azharites' mission through correspondence with Zhao Zhenwu, editor of *Yuehua*.[648] Hai was introduced to al-Khatib either through Zhao, who met with al-Khatib in Cairo in 1933 (see Chapter Four), or through the Nadwa scholars.[649] Hai's extensive writings in *al-Fath* focused in particular on the fate of East Turkistan Republic, which declared independence from China in 1933-34, but was crushed by Ma Zhongying's Chinese Muslim forces on behalf of the Guomindang government—a moment of deep disillusionment for Hai that he communicated vividly to the readers of *al-Fath*. After the failure of the East Turkistan Republic, Hai continued to publish articles in *al-Fath* about the history of Chinese Turkistan (material that was also published in Chinese in *Yuehua*).[650] Hai's writings in *al-Jami'a al-Islamiyya*, which often made the front page, covered similar topics with equal forcefulness, referring to the East Turkistan issue as an "independence movement" (*harakat istiqlal*) and occasionally as a "jihad."[651] In one article, he further specified that "the issue of Chinese Turkistan is not simply one between the

[648] Zhao, *Xixing riji*.

[649] Ibid.

[650] Badr al-Din al-Sini (a.k.a. Hai Weiliang), "Ta'sis dawla islamiyya min asfal al-pamir ila sur al-sin" [The Establishment of an Islamic State from the Pamirs to the Great Wall of China]. *Al-Fath*, 383, 1 Dhu-l-Qa'da 1352 (14 February 1934), 14-15; "Limadha tharat Turkistan al-siniyya?" [Why did Chinese Turkistan Rebel?]. *Al-Fath* 391, 5 Muharram 1353 (19 April 1934), 11-12; "Al-Islam fi Turkistan al-siniyya" [Islam in Chinese Turkistan]. *Al-Fath* 532, 535, 536, 537, 541, 542, 544, 547, 554, 555 (1937).

[651] Badr al-Din al-Sini, "al-Turkistan al-Siniyya: wa ma yajib an ya'rif al-'Arab wa-l-Muslimun 'anha: kutibat khususan li-l-Jami'a al-Islamiyya [Chinese Turkistan: What Arabs and Muslims Must Know: Exclusively for *al-Jami'a al-Islamiyya*]," *al-Jami'a al-Islamiyya*, 8 tashrin al-awwal 1933/18 Jumada al-akhira 1352, p. 1.

Chinese government and Muslims, but rather one between independent countries, and the land on which it takes place is land contested by multiple countries."[652]

The Chinese Azharites engagement with Cairo's Islamic transnationalist thinkers, publishers, and activists continued to expand from here, in tandem with those figures' continued writings about China and Islam in China. For the rest of the late 1930s and into the 1940s, a relatively short-lived but remarkable florescence occurred, even despite the growing assertiveness of fascist movements, mounting anxieties about a second world war, and final outbreak of that war. The intensity, bi-directionality, forms, topics, and types of actors involved in Sino-Arabic exchange all increased. Islam, Chinese history and culture, literature and poetry, and travel were all of interest. *Al-Risala* (1933-) and *al-Thaqafa* (1939-), both published by author and Azhar graduate Ahmad Amin, carried numerous articles about China as well as pieces by Chinese Azharites.[653]

Egyptian and Arab authors proceeded to write about their curiosity for humanistic topics such as Chinese art and history.[654] Some, such as the Palestinian scholar Kalthum 'Awda (1892-1965) of Nazareth, wrote an essay for *al-Hilal* about Arab communities living in Central Asia based on her travels there in summer 1935 with the Conference of Russian Arabists, an organization she helped develop (she noted "they speak a dialect close to that of the people of Iraq").[655] Other authors, some well-known, began writing theatrical works, short stories, and real

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[652] Badr al-Din al-Sini, "Harakat istiqlal Turkistan al-Siniyya [The East Turkistan Independence Movement]," *al-Jami'a al-Islamiyya* 885, 30 Kanun al-thani 1934/15 shawwal 1353, p. 6.

[653] On *al-Risala* and *al-Thaqafa*'s importance to Egypt's Islamo-Easternist orientation, see Gerhsoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, pp. 63-64.

[654] Ahmad Rasim Bey, al-Fann al-Sini_al-Majalla al-jadida (Egypt), 1 January 1939.

[655] Kalthum 'Awda, "27,000 Arabi fi jawar bilad al-Sin – rihla fi Asiya al-wusta [27,000 Arabs Living Near the Borders of China: Travels in Central Asia]," *al-Hilal*, 1 January 1937.

or fictional travel accounts of China.[656] Some of this literary production was catalyzed by the activities of Chinese Muslims; for example, Munira Sayyim Shah, editor of the magazine *Majallat al-Katla al-Islamiyya*, wrote the one-act play titled *Za'ir al-Sin* ("The Roar of China"), mentioned in Chapter Four, written as a pro-Chinese wartime propaganda tract with Ma Tianying's input during the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation's visit to Egypt from March to May 1938.[657] Meanwhile, the Egyptian Islamic thinker 'Abbas Mahmud al-'Aqqad, better known for his opposition to fascism, took an interest in the story of Pearl Buck's work in China, publishing an article about this in *al-Thaqafa*; 'Aqqad later wrote about the "wisdom of China" for *al-Risala* as well.[658] The Egyptian poet 'Abd al-Rahman Sidqi (1896-1973) also wrote several articles about China for *al-Thaqafa* in the early 1940s.[659]

Some of the Chinese Azharites themselves became involved in historical and literary exchanges. Hai Weiliang published an article in *al-Risala* in January 1938 on the history of religious connections between the Arabs and China, an early product of the research that eventually led to his book *al-'Alaqat bayn al-'Arab wa-l-Sin*.[660] In May 1941, Ma Junwu, translator of Taha Hussein's *The Days*, also produced a translation of a Chinese short story, published in *al-Thaqafa*.[661] In 1944-45, the Sichuanese Chinese Azharite Ma Jigao published

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[656] Salama Musa, Ku [Gu or Gao] yasif al-Sin al-jadida, *al-Majalla al-Jadida*, 1 January 1937; Ahmad Fathi Mursi, al-Sini (short story), *al-Riwaya* (Egypt), 1 March 1937; Ra'if Khuri, "al-Sin" (1), *al-Tali'a* (Syria), 1 April 1937; Ibrahim 'Abd al-Qadir al-Mazini, 'Ala tariqat al-Sin, *al-Risala* (Egypt), 3 March 1941, p. 400.

[657] Munira Sayyim Shah and Ibrahim T.J. Ma, Za'ir al-Sin (The Roar of China), al-Riwaya (Egypt), 1 May 1939.

[658] 'Abbas Mahmud al-'Aqqad, Siniyya jadida (about Pearl Buck), *al-Thaqafa* (Egypt), 2 May 1939, p. 18.

[659] 'Abd al-Rahman Sidqi, Mashahid min al-Hind al-Siniyya, *al-Thaqafa* (Egypt), 1 September 1941, p. 141; 'Abd al-Rahman Sidqi, al-Sin (1), *al-Thaqafa* (Egypt), 14 April 1942, p. 172; 'Abd al-Rahman Sidqi, al-Sin (2), *al-Thaqafa* (Egypt), 2 June 1942, p. 179.

[660] Badr al-Din al-Sini, "'Alaqat al-din bayn al-'Arab wa-l-Sin [*Religious Relations between the Arabs and China*]," al-Risala, 17 January 1938, pp. 101-02.

some poetry and children's stories in *al-Thaqafa*.[662] During this time, Na Zhong also began translating Ahmad Amin's three-volume history of Islamic civilization.

The most significant and substantive of all interactions between the Chinese Azharites and Cairo's Islamic activists, however, was that of Pang Shiqian and Muslim Brotherhood founder Hassan al-Banna (1906-49). Again, Pang Shiqian's *al-Islam wa-l-Sin* was the first publication commissioned by the Muslim Brotherhood's "Islamic World Outreach Division" (*qism al-ittisal bi-l-'alam al-islami*), of which Pang was a member. No doubt with al-Banna's direction, Pang dedicated *al-Sin wa-l-Islam* to King Farouq I, whom Pang served as a "consultant on Eastern affairs." Calling his book the "fruit of your planting and an ember of your inspiring light," Pang's dedication read:

> This book is the first product of the Islamic World Outreach Division of the central administration of the Muslim Brothers. God willing, a complete series on the history and conditions of all Muslim lands will follow it, set down by hands working under your esteemed protection. Perhaps they will find herein something to give shape to their aspirations and light their way.
>
> *My Liege*: As King of Egypt and the Egyptians, you are an exalted figure in the hearts of Easterners and Muslims. May you remain ever mindful of the awakening of the East and of Islam, and evermore guardian and protector of the global *umma* of the Quran.[663]

Al-Banna hoped Farouq would be an ally in strengthening Egypt's Islamic character.[664] By strengthening ties with the Chinese Muslims, Islamic transnationalists such as al-Banna could lend credence to the argument that Islamic connections formed the most important basis of

[661] This point draws on research in progress by Michael Gibbs Hill.

[662] Musa Ma Junwu, trans., "Daif al-Amir [The Prince's Guest]," *al-Thaqafa* (Egypt), 27 May 1941, p. 126; 'Abdullah Ma Jigao, "Min qisas al-atfal al-siniyya [Chinese Children's Stories]," *al-Thaqafa* (Egypt), 12 November 1944, p. 308.

[663] Tawadu' [Pang], *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, p. *jim*.

[664] Mitchell, *Society of the Muslim Brothers*; Baron, *Orphan Scandal*.

political community, and that Muslim leaders' attention ought not to be completely diverted by the ties of race or nation.

Building on his numerous other writings and statements on the topic, al-Banna's foreword to Pang's book systematically discussed this tension between the various forms of human community: the "community of Islam" (*al-jami'a al-Islamiyya*), the "bonds of the East" (*al-rabita al-sharqiyya*), the "bonds of race" (*al-rawabit al-qawmiyya*), and the "community of the (territorial) nation-state (*al-jami'a al-wataniyya*).[665] According to al-Banna, the hierarchy clearly unfolded in that order, even if the experiences and sentiments informing each level could partly overlap. Yet Islam remained for al-Banna, as for al-Afghani and 'Abduh, the "firmest bond" (*al-'urwa al-wuthqa*), whereas differences among human beings were ultimately arbitrary. This view, al-Banna wrote, was manifest in Quran and Hadith, as in the *Surat al-hujurat*: "O humankind! Indeed, we have created you male and female and made you into peoples and tribes that you may know one another; the noblest of you in the sight of God shall be the most righteous."[666] No worldly contingency could supersede the fact that "A Muslim is a brother to a Muslim." Al-Banna paraphrased these scriptural excerpts in a manner directly relevant to the Chinese Muslims and to the Islamic transnationalist worldview seeking to claim them:

> All the practical teachings of Islam confirm these specific doctrinal meanings and these general human ones. Prayer, alms-giving, Hajj, fasting, charity, beneficence, and everything else Islam commands of people, exists merely to strengthen these social bonds between Muslims and to strengthen forms of human understanding in their souls. As a result of all this, no matter how far-flung their countries [*mahma taba'adat awtanuhum*], distant their dwellings, or different their races or colors, all Muslims innately feel as though they are a single *umma* and a single people whose unity is that of basic doctrine [*'aqidah*]. It has been instilled in the hearts of the children of Islam that neither natural obstacles, nor geographical

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[665] Gershoni and Jankowski discuss al-Banna's discourse on the "four circles of identity" (Egypt, the Arabs, Islam, and mankind) in Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, pp. 94-95.

[666] Quran 49:13 (al-Hujurat).

> boundaries, nor political considerations, nor personal quarrels, can ever come between them, for God the Blessed and Sublime willed it so—a single *umma*—with His words: "Behold! This, your *umma*, is one *umma*; and I am your Lord, thus to Me alone shall you pray." Thus, an Egyptian Muslim should never see a Chinese Muslim as anything other than a respected brother and close friend.[667]

Thus, through scripture and his own interpretations, al-Banna argued that Islam was the only non-contingent level of community among the four.

The other three levels, by contrast, while possessing elements of legitimacy, had all taken shape due to specific and mutable worldly conditions. The bonds of the East, he explained, resulted primarily from the "arrogance of the West: its pride in its material power, its science, its knowledge, its florescence, all the effects it has wrought thanks to the modern natural sciences." At the same time, however, al-Banna begged his readers that "It would only be fair to recall that the East too has its cosmopolitanism, its civilization, its philosophy, its spirituality, its books, and its prophets and saints; that it is still a beacon of science, knowledge, principles, and belief; and indeed that the world turns not on physical material alone, nor is ruled solely by fire and steel."[668] Meanwhile, al-Banna stated, the Arabs, much like "the Yellow Race…or Slavs, Latins, or Anglo-Saxons," were currently pursuing a form of racial and cultural solidarity—Arab nationalism, though he did not use that term—based on their common language and lifeways, as a means of self-strengthening in the face of modern challenges. Al-Banna maintained, however, that this form of solidarity was not a negation of Islamic community, but rather "a building-block in that larger edifice." Finally, the notion of the territorial nation-state had emerged recently due to the fact that "every people demands its rights to freedom and a dignified life."[669] Echoing the

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[667] Hassan al-Banna, "Jami'at [Communities]," in Tawadu' [Pang], *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, pp. *waw-zayn*.

[668] Al-Banna, "Jami'at," p. *zayn*.

[669] Ibid., p. *hah*.

Brotherhood's motto that "Islam is the solution," al-Banna concluded by claiming that "As for the problem of the state and the system of rule, [the Quran] solves this in eight words in *Surat Al 'Imran*: "Consult your people; once decided, trust in God."[670] As non-Arab friends and colleagues seeking to become better Muslims, the Chinese Azharites enabled al-Banna to offer striking and concrete proof that Islam indeed exceeded all other forms of human solidarity.

In sum, the Chinese Azharites were able to connect with and spark interest among multiple audiences in Cairo, even ones that were actively competing and disagreeing with one another: for example, the Azhar sheikhs versus the Islamic transnationalist activists, or Salama Musa versus the proponents of an Islamo-Easternest orientation. This, combined with the multiple instances of humanistic interest Egyptians, Chinese Azharites, and other Arabic-speaking actors expressed toward one another, offers abundant proof that Arab Sinophilia should not be seen simply as a reactive and uninformed symptom of Arab anticolonialism. Rather, Sino-Egyptian and Sino-Arabic contacts represented the maximalist end of Islamic transnationalism and even relatively secular nationalist Egyptian bi-culturalism.

"What is to be Done?" Al-Azhar's Significance for Modern Chinese Islam

As forceful as the rhetoric of the Arabic press could be, the ultimate purpose of the Chinese Muslims' journeys to Cairo was to study at al-Azhar. Al-Azhar provided the Chinese Azharites—and by extension, via writings, translations, and correspondences, their associates back home—with readily applicable positions on the relationship between Islam and modernity and answers to various questions concerning Islam. As we saw in Chapter Three, this included a number of counter-Orientalist polemics that, when translated into Chinese, could equally be

[670] Al-Banna, "Jami'at," p. *ta*. Quran 3:159. While the original text concerns God's advice on interpersonal relations between the Prophet Muhammad and his people, the potential implications for government are clear enough.

made to defend Islam against Han Chinese misunderstandings and Islamophobia. At the same time, Cairo and the Arabic press formed an inescapable context for the Chinese Azharites' approach even to formal questions of Islamic knowledge, as well as for al-Azhar generally. After all, Rida's *al-Manar*, Ahmad Amin's *al-Risala,* and other prominent Islamic periodicals vigorously debated the Azhar sheikhs and indefatigably reported on developments within the institution along with commentary on their political significance. In fact, al-Azhar's journal, *Nur al-Islam* (from 1936 known as *Majallat al-Azhar*), founded only in 1930, probably would not have come into existence without pressure from the Arabic press to make the institution more transparent to a rapidly expanding public sphere.[671] Together—or rather, by virtue of their various convergences and divergences—al-Azhar's Islamic scholarship and Egypt's social and intellectual milieu offered the Chinese Azharites a vision of Islam that could work for China.

To see how this was the case, we should begin by reminding ourselves how the Chinese Azharites understood the challenges facing them. Ma Jian, echoing Shakib Arslan, stated in a section of *Nazra jami'a* titled "reasons for the backwardness of Muslims in China" that these reasons were three: "ignorance, disagreements, and poverty."[672] Pang Shiqian, however, gave the most consistent thought to the question of what must be done for Muslims in China. He framed the problem in his introduction to *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, in terms that combined Arabic intellectuals' focus on "progress versus backwardness" (Pang's *al-Sin wa-l-Islam* referenced Arslan's *Limadha ta'akhkharat al-muslimun*) with al-Azhar's modernist polemic:

> When scholars and thinkers seek out the causes that led Muslims first toward progress and then to stagnation and decline, the plain and simple truth will surely emerge that the pious forebears [*al-salaf al-sālih*] possessed the ability to exert *ijtihad*: the capacity for reason and clear-sightedness in all matters including their

[671] Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*.

[672] Makin al-Sini [Ma Jian], *Nazra jami'a*, p. 73.

> understanding of social reality, which propelled their progress…As for the period of decline, they claim that "the door of *ijtihad* had closed"—a fatal flaw that has brought upon Muslims untold woes, such that their lives have grown dark, their minds provincialized and degenerate…
>
> What has happened to the Muslims in China is the same as what has happened to their brothers in all countries. It is imperative for reformers and modernizers wishing to remedy this and protect their interests to undertake research and study before they seek to describe and prescribe. I therefore wrote this book as a description of the conditions of Muslims in China, that they might know themselves and their brothers throughout the world, that they might assess their ills and prescribe a treatment, that they might progress with the noble caravan of life and stand with their Muslim brethren as one hand in the world, in accordance with His word: "Cling fast, ye one and all, and do not let go the mighty cord [i.e. Quran/covenant] of God."
>
> What we seek is a return to the golden age [*al-ʻasr al-dhahabī*] of Islam and Muslims. We will achieve this only through a return to reason [*ijtihad*] and invention [*istinbāt*], for these are the bases of success, the pillars of progress [*al-taqaddum*], the great movers of the world. As for blind imitation [*taqlīd*], it is the bringer of weakness, the harbinger of stagnation, the first step on the path toward perdition and demise.[673]

According to Pang, Muslims in China needed both moral awakening and material advancement. They shared this need with Muslims everywhere, but their circumstances were more desperate than most, and other Muslim societies had embarked earlier on finding solutions, which Chinese Muslims could now learn from and apply. The key was the Islamic modernist argument that original, true Islam was synonymous with reason and the pursuit of progress in all its forms.

To restate the problem at the heart of this study: by the early twentieth century, and certainly by the 1930s, Chinese Muslim leaders had reached the conclusion that Muslims in

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[673] Tawadu‘ [Pang], *China and Islam*, pp. xv-xvi. This translation originally appeared in Chen, "Re-Orientation," pp. 35, 45.

In May 1946, when he and his associates were beginning their journey home, Pang articulated the problem in somewhat different terms. Meeting with a Professor ‘Abd al-‘Aziz at the home of [Mustafa] ‘Abd al-Raziq, Pang reported: "He was curious about the conditions of Islam in China: ‘How many Muslims live in China?’ I answered, ‘Fifty million, or one-tenth of the total population.’ He asked again: ‘What is the cultural level of Muslims compared with non-Muslims?’ I answered: ‘Backward!’ He asked: ‘Why?’ I said: ‘There is one main reason why China’s Muslims have fallen behind the rest of the world’s Muslims, and that is that they have taken the lesson of "not desiring after the things of *al-dunya*" too literally.’" Relating a Hadith to the effect of "*Al-Dunya* (this world) is the garden of *al-akhira* (the world to come)," Pang continued, "‘We of course do not oppose the lesson of "not desiring after the things of *al-dunya*," but Islam is a religion of both this world and the next. In this regard it is entirely unlike Buddhism, for example.’ The professor listened closely without responding." Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, pp. 34-35.

China could not form their own country. The suppression of the nineteenth-century Muslim uprisings had made this clear. Meanwhile, improving Han Chinese tolerance of Islam was likewise not a task that would be accomplished overnight. The only option left for Chinese Muslims was to assert their "right to difference" while bearing the responsibility for gradual change on their own shoulders. But how? Unlike for their forebears, the Han Kitab authors, it was not enough for the Chinese Azharites to simply demonstrate that Islam was conceptually or aesthetically compatible with Confucianism or Chineseness. Moreover, Chinese nationalism and rigid Guomindang ideology required that loyalty to the nation-state be exclusive and absolute. "Simultaneity," "reconciliation," "moral equivalence": the ambiguity of these Han Kitab projects was now a luxury of the past. The challenge for Chinese Muslims in the twentieth century was to reconcile Islam not with abstract "Chineseness," but with the far more uncompromising nation-building program of the Guomindang. This program emphasized not only nationalism, but modernity, rationalism, and science. This program itself was non-negotiable; the only question was how to uphold it in an authentic Islamic way.

This is where al-Azhar came in. Its positions on a wide range of issues espoused the very same values of modernity, rationalism, and science as the Guomindang. Al-Azhar's journal and its pedagogy formed an arsenal of modernist positions waiting to be translated. Issue by issue, al-Azhar offered Chengda and similar institutions an incomparable form of authority with which to push the modernist agenda forward throughout the country, especially among the allegedly undereducated and superstitious Sufis of the Northwest. Defining Muslims' own ignorance as the problem, and education and enlightenment as the cure, allowed Chinese Muslims, like their counterparts from other countries, to pursue what they saw as positive social change in an Islamically authentic manner under conditions—European colonialism, Chinese nationalism, and

so on—where the question of political alternatives was indefinitely deferred and could not be raised directly.[674] For the foreseeable future, the best way to survive in China was to learn to be better Muslims—which conveniently meant espousing the same modernist values as the Chinese state. This was why the Chinese Muslims came to al-Azhar. After all, Muhammad ʻAbduh himself had said that Muslims' best chance of progressing in the world—in contrast to the Christians, who had grown materially powerful while abandoning faith—lay in using reason to arrive at a more perfect understanding of their Islam.[675]

What were the main issues in this arsenal of modernism? First and foremost, reason: especially independent human reason exerted vis-à-vis doctrine, law, and even questions of everyday life (*ijtihad*, as defined by Islamic modernists). Reason implied that "blind imitation of earlier examples" (*taqlid*) was to be frowned upon and had led to Muslims' moral and material decay. Reason implied that Islam was compatible with science: thus "Islam and science" or "religion and science" formed the second major issue in the modernist arsenal. Third, new histories of Islam emerged as a result of the assertion of Islam's rationality against both domestic and foreign foes: for example, that the earliest Muslims were practitioners of *ijtihad*, or that later generations were accomplished scientists who, among other things, contributed to the European renaissance and scientific revolution.[676] Fourth, this new interpretation of Islamic history often involved emphasizing the achievements of Arab Muslims, and privileging Arabic as the language of Islam's earliest and most authoritative texts.[677] Fifth, Islamic modernists often

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[674] Gesink, *Islamic Reform*, p. 7, describes this period as a "liminal time" and "critical juncture" for Egypt, when it was "not quite totally under Ottoman control and then not quite totally under British control"

[675] Hourani, *Arabic Thought*; Gesink, *Islamic Reform*, p. 170.

[676] Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*, pp. 86-90.

[677] Ibid., pp. 90-94.

emphasized that true Islam respected women's rights and democratic forms of government—again, against the accusations of Orientalists and detractors, and in spite of the erroneous practices of certain members of the Muslim community. Sixth, writing, publishing, translation, and above all the reform of traditional Islamic educational institutions was the key to modernizing and strengthening Muslim communities everywhere.

It has been argued that modern Islamic thought—sometimes misleadingly called Salafism—can be divided into two modes, "modernist" and "purist," with modernists placing greater emphasis on the constellation described above, and purists placing greater emphasis on "orthodoxy" conventionally conceived, and particularly on the doctrine of God's unicity (*al-tawhid*).[678] Does such a division hold? The case of the Chinese Azharites suggests that it may not. Consider the stated "Islamic program" (*manhaj islami*) of *al-Manar*, the foremost Islamic modernist periodical, and that of *Yuehua*, the foremost Chinese Islamic modernist periodical:

Al-Manar

1. Rectification of doctrine (*al-'aqida*) and opposition to pernicious innovations and superstitious accretions (*al-bida' wa-l-khurafat*);
2. [Improving] education and learning in accordance with the views of the Imam Muhammad 'Abduh;
3. The issue of the Arabic language: opposing those who seek to use colloquial (*al-'ammiyya*) instead of formal Arabic (*al-fusha*), or to write Arabic in Latin letters;
4. *Al-Manar*'s position with respect to Western civilization: (1) Islamic countries should imitate Europe with respect to modern sciences, industry, and technological innovations, [but] (2) making relentless war against Europeans' incursions into Islamic countries, including through moral erosion and deleterious practices.[679]

Yuehua

1. To implement Islamic doctrines consistent with modern (*xiandai*) trends;

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[678] Lauzière, *Making of Salafism*.

[679] *Al-Manar*, 1, pp. 1-2.

2. To introduce news about Muslims (*huimin*) in other parts of the world;
3. To improve awareness of Muslims in China (*zhongguo huimin*) and improve their status;
4. To explain the misunderstandings between the new and old Muslim sects;
5. To strengthen a conception of the nation-state (*guojia guannian*) among Muslims in China;
6. To promote education and a better livelihood for Muslims in China.[680]

Both lists contain elements that Lauzière would call "modernist" and "purist." Nevertheless, in both cases, the purist orientation is extremely difficult to separate from the modernist one, and notably, the term *tawhid* does not appear (the first item in *al-Manar*'s list only indirectly implies it). In addition, it is clear that the modernist and purist strains were both directed at the reform of erroneous beliefs and practices, which in both cases meant especially Sufism and "tradition." *Yuehua*, furthermore, stresses the modernist orientation even more than *al-Manar*.

The remaining sections turn first to the question of whether the Chinese Azharites, and leading Chinese Muslims generally, were advocates of *tawhid* in the purist sense. It then traces the Chinese Azharites' engagement with the other core concept of Islamic modernism, *ijtihad*.

The Ambiguities of *Tawhid*

Conventionally, *tawhid* has been defined in a number of ways. Morphologically, the Arabic word *tawhid* is the second-form verbal noun derived from the root *w-h-d*, as in *wahid*, or "one." Semantically, the derivative carries both a basic transitive meaning ("to make one, to unify") as well as a declarative or "deeming" meaning ("to affirm the oneness of something"). *Tawhid* refers both to the fact of God's oneness and to the human practice of recognizing that oneness.[681]

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[680] *Yuehua* 1.1; originally translated in Mao, "Chengda," p. 157 (I have made only minor adjustments).

[681] As such, *tawhid* is sometimes misleadingly translated as the transparent equivalent of the Christian-centric term "monotheism"; *tawhid* is in fact a narrower and more specific category than "monotheism." Many Muslim proponents of the modern understanding of *tawhid* pointed out that Christianity's version of monotheism fell short of true *tawhid* due to the concept of the trinity, considered a corrupting compromise with paganism. See for example Muhammad Farid Wajdi, "Mu'akasat al-muslimin fi tawhidihim [The Opposite of Muslims in their 'Tawhid'],"

Theologically speaking, it is the principle expressed in the first half of the *shahada* (*la il'aha illa Allah*, "There is no god but God"). The word *tawhid* itself does not appear in the Quran, but God is repeatedly described as being one and without equal, for example in the *Surat al-Ikhlas*. *Tawhid* refers to the notion that God is uniquely, ultimately, and unqualifiedly divine and powerful: the opposite of *shirk*, or associating or likening entities other than God with God. Polemically speaking, a dogmatic, militant, anti-Sufi view of *tawhid* first emerged through the mid-eighteenth-century alliance between Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab and the Saudi royal family, who were known for destroying the tombs of Shia, Sufis, and others on the grounds that no entity should receive human reverence other than God. "Purist" Islamic thinkers in the twentieth century, eyeing the Wahhabis' doctrinal consistency with a mix of anxiety and envy, eventually construed *tawhid* in opposition to *kalam* ("dialectical theology"). Modern purists came to see this refutation of *kalam* as additionally rooted in the works of Ibn Taymiyya (1250-1328) and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1292-1350); or, more precisely, they sought to rework those authors so as to present the concept of *tawhid* more unequivocally at the expense of *kalam*.[682] *Tawhid* is generally considered the most important element of some purists' anti-Sufi polemic.[683] The same purists tended to view Sufis' "pernicious innovations and superstitious accretions" (*al-bida' wa-l-khurafat*) as manifestations of *shirk*. Purists felt that Sufis were wrong in creed and therefore wrong in deed.[684]

Majallat al-Azhar 9/1 (Muharram 1357 i.e. March 1938), pp. 38-40. This issue's publication happened to coincide with the arrival of Pang Shiqian's Chinese Azharite delegation, which arrived on 23 March 1938. The abovementioned

[682] Lauzière, *Making of Salafism*.

[683] Ibid.

[684] D. Gimarat, "Tawhid," *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2. The nature and history of *tawhid* encourages the assumption that this concept dominated Islamic thought from the beginning to modern times. Shahab Ahmed and

The trajectory of Chinese Azharite Zhang Bingduo, for one, would appear to conform to such conventional definitions of *tawhid*. Arriving in Cairo with the second delegation in December 1932, Zhang proceeded to study Quran and Hadith, perhaps hinting at a purist orientation. Far less ambiguously, when Zhang returned to China, he refused to bow before portraits of Sun Yat-sen, and on one occasion even smashed a figurine of the Prophet at gathering of his Chinese Muslims associates. The basis for such actions was that Islam supposedly did not permit objects or practices that threatened *shirk* and violated *tawhid*. Remembered by his son Hongtu as stoic and uncompromising, Zhang also opposed Hongtu's aspiration to be an artist. This militant aniconism recalls the activities of the earliest Wahhabis.[685]

Did Zhang's actions represent a broader ideological orientation on the part of the Chinese Azharites—or al-Azhar, for that matter? In Chapter One, we learned that the Shanghai Islamic Bookstore categorized 'Abduh's *Risalat al-tawhid*, the creed *al-'Aqai'd al-Nasafiyya*, and Taftazani's *Sharh al-Nasafiyya* as works of *tawhid*, though without specifying what that meant. Additionally, in Chapter Two, we saw that Da Pusheng clearly defined *tawhid* as affirmation of God's unicity and implicitly defined it against the alleged errors of Sufis and traditionalists. Did the Chinese Azharites share this position? Basic theological *tawhid* is of course a main tenet of Islam, but how central was polemical *tawhid* to Chinese Islamic modernism? To what extent did modern Chinese Muslims agree on the meaning and implications of *tawhid*?

It is generally believed that Ma Wanfu (1853-1934), an ethnically Mongolian Dongxiang Muslim of Hezhou (Linxia), Gansu, and founder of the Chinese "Ikhwan" movement, was the

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others, however, warn against such an assumption. Many make the point that to do so would be an ahistorical retrojection of Saudi puritanicalism. Ahmed, *What is Islam*, pp. 137-40 (including notes).

[685] The Chinese Muslims rarely if ever identified as "Salafi" in this period.

first to introduce a Saudi-inspired modern purist orientation to China. According to Jonathan Lipman, Ma made the Hajj and studied in Mecca from 1888 to 1892, where his studies "certainly included fundamentalist ideas such as those of 'Abd al-Wahhab."[686] Lipman notes, however, that Ma neither renounced the Hanafi *madhhab* nor lived under Saudi rule in Mecca, which at the time remained under Ottoman control. The real evidence of Ma's ideological transformation emanates from his actions after returning to China, where he opposed Sufi as well as non-Muslim Chinese influences, and advocated a rigid scripturalism. There is little if any textual evidence, however, for how Ma viewed the concept of *tawhid*.

One of the earliest usages of the term *tawhid* in modern Chinese Muslim sources occurred in an exhortative text by Ma Lianyuan of Yunnan. Ma, however, *tawhid* as an anti-Christian rather than anti-Sufi position. Ma's two-volume work was titled *Tabtin al-tathlith wa tathbit al-tawhid* ("Suppress the Trinity and Affirm Unicity," 1899/1316AH/Guangxu 25), with the additional Chinese title *Chu san chong yi* ("Worship the One, Dispense with the Three").[687] In it, Ma writes that he felt "compelled to affirm the principle of God's oneness" in order to discourage Muslims from heeding a propaganda tract on the trinity that Jesuit priests had translated into Chinese and Arabic two years earlier, titled *Manar al-Haqq* ("The Beacon of Truth"). In Ma's words, "He who remains silent on the actual truth is a miserable devil." Because Ma wrote the work entirely in Arabic, he gave no Chinese equivalent for the term *tawhid*. It is abundantly clear, however, that Ma defined *tawhid* in opposition to the Christianity rather than in contrast to Muslims with whom he disagreed.[688]

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[686] Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, p. 203.

[687] A copy eventually came into the possession of Rev. Claude L. Pickens, Jr., and can be found in the Pickens Collection at Harvard-Yenching Library. While similar works appeared in Arabic elsewhere in the world, this appears to be an original composition in Arabic by Ma Lianyuan.

[688] It is less clear what sources, other than the Quran, may have informed his arguments.

Two decades later, the short-lived periodical *Qingzhen zhoukan* ("The Pure and True Weekly," 1921), published by the Islamic Bookstore (*Qingzhen shubao she*) at Beijing's Niujie Mosque, was apparently the first among modern Chinese Muslim periodicals to use the term *renzhu* ("acknowledging the [one true] Lord," accepted as the present-day equivalent to *tawhid*) to mean *tawhid*.[689] Niujie was where the Imam Wang Kuan taught Da Pusheng, Ma Songting, Zhao Zhenwu, and other disciples. In this particular article, however, the discussion of God's oneness focused on distinguishing Islam from Christianity, much the same as Ma Lianyuan's tract from Yunnan. It asserted that the Quran provided the basis for *tawhid*, but it made no mention of Sufism or superstition. At the end of the essay, the author added an appendix containing a revealing statement, one that runs counter to polemical notions of *tawhid*:

> "Philosophy" (*zhexue*) comes from the Greek word for "love of knowledge." Works on philosophy translated into Chinese explain this in detail. When the Prophet Muhammad first spread our faith, and shortly after his death, the Arabs did not pay much attention to philosophy. Greek philosophy emphasized the distinction between true and false. As a mode of thinking, it was already quite old. There were many contradictions between it and the theology of our faith, known as "acknowledging the Lord" (*renzhu zhi xue*). The learned members of the faith were not fearful, however, but rather undertook to translate Greek philosophy into Arabic…they could then debate it more easily, and Greek philosophy became absorbed as a mode (*dao*) of Arabic thought. Making use of Greek philosophy in those times is like making use of psychology, logic, or aesthetics in our own. It does not contradict the essence of Islam (*qie bu bei huijiao zhi benzhi*).[690]

In other words, when modern Chinese Muslims began writing about the concept of *renzhu* as the equivalent of *tawhid*, they viewed it in the basic theological sense (e.g. in contradistinction to the Christian trinity) and, significantly, as a principle that could accommodate other forms of truth.

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[689] Yuan Sou, "Ren zhu [Acknowledging the One True Lord]," *Qingzhen zhoukan*, 1/2 (1921), pp. 13-14. Yuan Sou ("smelly bog") was clearly a pen name; it is unclear who the author might have been, but generally speaking, Niujie at the time was the abode of Wang Kuan and his disciples such as Da Pusheng and Ma Songting.

The term *renzhu* also appeared in Chinese periodicals in non-Islamic contexts dating back to the 1870s.

[690] Yuan Sou, "Dianli zeyao – renzhu (si) [Selections from the Classics – *renzhu* (4)]," *Qingzhen zhoubao* 1/7 (1921), p. 15.

Again, there was no indication that *renzhu*'s meaning here was in any way exclusionary or fundamentalist. Quite the opposite: here, a history of *tawhid*'s relationship with philosophy was being used as a metaphor for the modernist program of keeping Islam open to foreign knowledge (this was far from a unanimous position, however; in the same issue of the same journal, a different author emphasized that *renzhuxue* was the "basis for all morality").[691]

The 1930s brought increasing use of the term *renzhu* to mean *tawhid* in Chinese Muslim periodicals in Beijing, Yunnan, Hunan, Tianjin, and elsewhere. It also saw growing instances of *renzhu* sparking debates among Muslims, rather than between Muslims and Christians. In 1932, *Yuehua* published a short article summarizing the views of an imam named Li Zhengyuan, which identified *renzhu* as the primary source of disagreement between the "old" and "new" factions.[692] The following year, Bai Yunxiang wrote an article for Chengda's campus bulletin titled "Refuting Those who Acknowledge Spirits or Multiple Gods Rather than the One True God."[693] While Bai still reserved most of his critiques for atheists and Christians, his division of the world not by religion itself but by "those who believe in no god, those who believe in multiple gods, and those who believe in the one true God" opened a space to oppose fellow Muslims who did not sufficiently adhere to the doctrine of *tawhid*. Bai's article was also one of the earliest uses of the phrase "acknowledging that God is one and has no equal" (*ren zhu du yi wu er*), which by the late twentieth century became a standard expression among Chinese Muslims.

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[691] Fan Huaitang, "Lunshuo – renzhu lun [Theoretical Discussion – *renzhu*], *Qingzhen zhoubao* 1/7 (1921), pp. 4-5.

[692] "Renzhu cuiyan – Li Zhengyuan ahong zhi yiwen [The Pure Discourse of *Renzhu* – A Text Left by Imam Li Zhengyuan]," Yuehua 4/8 (1932), p. 20. The old, he said, believed that God cannot be described in the same manner as ordinary beings and things. The new, meanwhile, maintained that while God was epiphenomenal and non-material, He was also equally present in all things.

[693] Bai Yunxiang, "Lunzhuo: bo renling shuzhu yu fo renzhu [Theoretical Discussion: Refuting spiritism and associationism and rejecting renzhu]," *Chengda xueshenghui yuekan* 3/3 (1933), pp. 4-8.

The occasion was ripe for al-Azhar and the Chinese Azharites to provide some clarity on the meaning of *renzhu* and *tawhid*. At that very time, Ma Jian, then aged twenty-seven, had begun translating Muhammad ‘Abduh’s *Risalat al-Tawhid* (*Treatise on the Doctrine of God’s Unicity*, 1898) into Chinese. The translation first appeared serialized in *Yuehua* in 1933-34, and was later published in book form by Shanghai’s Commercial Press under the alternative title *Huijiao zhexue* (“Islamic Philosophy”).[694] Ma wrote in Chinese in his translator’s introduction in *Yuehua* that he had asked the Azhar Sheikh Ibrahim al-Jibali for his recommendations on the latest works of *renzhuxue*, upon which Sheikh al-Jibali directed him to ‘Abduh’s *Risala*.[695] Ma Jian, however, was not necessarily in a fully authoritative position to carry out such a translation.[696] Although he regularly sought al-Jibali’s guidance in clarifying certain points about ‘Abduh’s *Risala* and even “asked him to correct his notes,” he does not say explicitly whether al-Jibali condoned the translation itself. Furthermore, while Ma had been the only Chinese Azharite of the original four skilled enough in Arabic not to be sent to remedial language classes prior to embarking on the standard curriculum,[697] his enrollment status in al-Azhar’s Faculty of Theology (*Kulliyyat usul al-din*) in fact remained ambiguous even in December 1934, his third year in

[694] Benite, “Taking ‘Abduh to China,” p. 259.

[695] Ma Jian, trans., *Renzhu dagang* (1), *Yuehua* 5/27 (1933), p. 11.

[696] Yufeng Mao’s assertion that “Because of his long-term dedication to Islamic studies, Ma Jian excelled immediately upon commencing his coursework” is evidently a generous interpretation. Ma’s biographer indicates that Ma indeed struggled in his early years at al-Azhar, relying on Egyptian classmates to help him with what he did not understand, and staying on campus during the summer vacation in order to “review and systematize the knowledge he had studied during the year.” Yufeng Mao, “Selective Learning,” p. 153; Li Zhenzhong, *Xuezhe de zhuiqiu: Ma Jian zhuan* [*The Pursuit of Scholarship: A Biography of Ma Jian*] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2000), p. 34. In general, the extent to which the Chinese Azharites may struggled in their studies has tended to be downplayed.

Ma’s abovementioned choice to translate Hussein al-Jisr’s *al-Risala al-hamidiyya fi haqiqat al-diyana al-Islamiyya* (*A Hamidian Tract on Islam’s Basis in Fact*), a traditionalist work denying Darwinism and maintaining conservative views on issues such as slavery, polygamy, and jihad, should also call into question the nature and consistency of his Islamic modernist commitments.

[697] Mao, “Selective Learning,” p. 153.

Cairo, at which time his translation of ‘Abduh’s *Risala* was essentially complete. In October 1934, al-Azhar’s High Council had issued Ma a notice that they had still not decided whether they could accept his secondary school diploma, prompting him to write to the Sheikh al-Azhar, Muhammad al-Ahmadi al-Zawahiri, in a state of some distress and confusion after two months of waiting for a result.[698] There was also a question of whether he should attend the first or second year in the Faculty of Theology (he had started off in the second, but the sheikhs had recommended he transfer down to the first).[699] This is significant, for according to its curriculum enacted in 1931, the Faculty of Theology only began teaching *tawhid* in the second year.[700]

Soon thereafter, Imam Ma Ruitu undertook his own translation of ‘Abduh’s *Risala*, published by Zhonghua shuju in 1937. As Zvi Ben-Dor Benite notes, unlike the *Yuehua* or Commercial Press titles of Ma Jian’s translation, Ma Ruitu titled his work *Huijiao renyi lun* (“Islam’s Discourse of Acknowledging the One”).[701] Abandoning *renzhu* in favor of *renyi* further suggests that Chinese Muslims did not have a stable definition of *renzhu* in this period.

Five years later, Pang Shiqian himself would reveal the full extent of that ambiguity. In 1942, Pang wrote an article on the topic of *renzhu* for *Huijiao wenhua* (“Islamic Civilization,” 1941-43), a journal published by the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Association after retreating to Chongqing with the GMD government. Several Chinese Azharites, former members

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[698] Ma Jian to Shiekh al-Azhar [Muhammad al-Ahmadi al-Zawahiri], 2 December 1934. www.alazharmemory.org.

[699] “Iltimas li-l-talib Muhammad Makin al-Sini intisabahu ila al-sana al-ula aw al-thaniya bi-kulliyyat usul al-din wa qarar majlis idarat al-kulliyya bi-sha’nihi [The Student Muhammad Makin al-Sini’s Request to Enroll in Year One or Two in the Faculty of Theology, with the Decision of the Faculty’s Administrative Council],” October-December 1934.

[700] “Khitta wa manhaj al-dirasa li-kulliyyat usul al-din [Curriculum and Syllabus for the Faculty of Theology],” 1349/1931, pp. *hah*, 1-3.

[701] Benite, “Bringing ‘Abduh to China,” p. 261.

of the diplomatic delegations, Chinese Muslim intellectuals including Bai Shouyi, and Chinese Muslim leaders such as Tang Kesan and Bai Chongxi all wrote for the journal. The journal's audience was not only Muslims, but the GMD government and other Han leaders residing in the wartime capital. Pang's article, however, titled "Renzhu xue yu renzhu xuejia" ("*renzhu* and its adherents")—which we might expect to be the Chinese translation of *al-tawhid wa-l-muwahhidun* ("*tawhid* and its adherents")—was not a discussion of *tawhid* at all. Rather, it was a loose translation of the first few sections of a long series of essays published in *Nur al-Islam*/*Majallat al-Azhar* by Dr. Muhammad Ghallab, a French-trained historian of philosophy teaching in al-Azhar's Faculty of Theology, on the topic of "al-Kalam wa-l-Mutakallimun" ("Dialectical Theology and its Adherents"). Ghallab's work surveyed all the major groups and figures who practiced dialectical theology in classical Islamic history, from the Mu'tazila to the Ikhwan al-Safa, al-Farabi, Ibn 'Arabi, and others—figures some modernists, including 'Abduh, sought to rehabilitate in the name of pointing out the greater intellectual openness of the past.[702]

How could Pang's use of the term *renzhu* diverge so considerably from that of Ma Jian, his fellow Chinese Azharite? Does the problem lie in the term *renzhu*, in the term *tawhid*, or in our own external understanding or misunderstanding of them? It is partly in the term *renzhu*, which could mean both "knowing God" (in the Sufi sense of coming to know the divine partly

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[702] Muhammad Ghallab, "al-Kalam wa-l-Mutakallimun [Dialectical Theology and its Practitioners]," *Majallat al-Azhar*, 12/1-10, 13/1. Ghallab was building on a priority identified especially by Muhammad 'Abduh. As Marwa Elshakry states in *Reading Darwin in Arabic*, Islamic modernists emphasis on the compatibility of Islam and science was part of what tled them (especially Muhammad 'Abduh) to revitalize *'ilm al-kalam*: "The need to revitalize *'ilm al-kalam* was particularly necessary, 'especially in these days,' when the faith was under attack from critics of Islam, wrote 'Abduh in 1877. He argued that reasoned proofs of God's existence would prove to be Islam's strongest bulwark against critics and doubters. Such a theology was alos urgently needed to address current 'spiritual ailments,'—and to ensure that Islam would be free of intellectual 'stagnation' (*jumud*), a charge…he as to frequently use against the majority of the 'ulama, particularly those at al-Azhar. 'Abduh thus saw a revitalization of *kalam*, through the use of reasoning (*nazar wa-istidlal*), dialectics (*jadal wa-munazara*), and logic (*mantiq*) as the best means to preserve the faith in modern times." Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic*, p. 181.

through esoteric, "mystical" means available only to the initiated), and "acknowledging God" (in the modernist sense of *tawhid*). It is also partly the original Arabic term *tawhid*: after all, 'Abduh's *Risala* was not primarily a discourse on God's oneness at all, but rather an exposition and explanation of some of the key aspects of Islam as seen from 'Abduh's modernist viewpoint, consisting above all of an argument for human freedom of thought.[703] Some even accused 'Abduh's *Risala* of denying the oneness of God, for example due to its argument that the Quran "as read" was created, not eternal.[704] For 'Abduh at least, *tawhid* did not imply rejection of the dialectical or "speculative" tradition of Islamic theology, but rather the embrace of it.[705] By translating Ghallab, Pang was attempting to redefine *tawhid* in a manner similar to 'Abduh: to recover a dynamic Sufi theology in order to argue that oneness should not be understood as singularity, but indeed that oneness is above all found in, and affirmed by, the infinite plurality and multiplicity of existence.

Politically, one thing is clear: Pang's understanding of *renzhu* stood in marked contrast to that of his superior Da Pusheng, who maintained a rigid definition of *renzhu* as *tawhid* and viewed the concept of God's oneness as the basis for the moral transformation and political integration of China's frontier Muslims (discussed in Chapter Two). Pang shared the desire to transforming the lives and thought China's Muslims, particularly those on the frontiers, but he did not share Da's view that dogmatic adherence to *tawhid* formed a central pillar of that project.

In short, the term *renzhu*—which today is accepted by Chinese Muslims as transparently and uncontroversially signifying *tawhid*, including in the polemical anti-Sufi sense—in fact did

[703] Gesink, *Islamic Reform*, p. 170.

[704] Ibid.

[705] Gesink, *Islamic Reform*, p. 77, discusses 'Abduh's support for *kalam*.

not carry that meaning in a stable or consistent way for many of the foundational figures of modern Chinese Islam.[706] The purpose of this extended narration of the relative absence of dogmatic *tawhid* from modern Chinese Muslims' thinking is twofold. First, it illustrates that the principle of *tawhid*, normalized in more recent decades as one of if not the most important concept in Islam, was neither a major focus of the Chinese Muslim modernists or their Egyptian mentors, nor was its meaning, in Chinese translation or in the Arabic original, fully agreed upon.[707] Second, it therefore implies that alternative Islamic modernist principles may have been seen as more promising bases for reforming Islam in China.

Reason Triumphant: *Ijtihad* as an Alternative Vision for Islam in China

Pang called reason "the pillar of progress" and the "great mover of the world." Gesink argues that beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, under self-proclaimed modernist reformers such as Hassan al-'Attar, Rifa'a al-Tahtawi, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, and Muhammad 'Abduh, *ijtihad*'s meaning at al-Azhar expanded dramatically from "a legal method restricted to use by highly trained jurists" to a general "principle of intellectual investigation." A concomitant circumscription occurred in the meaning of *taqlid*, which according to the modernists did not mean "adherence to precedent," but rather "blind imitation of the past."[708] By the 1910s, even the most resistant sheikhs at al-Azhar tended to admit the need for some form of *ijtihad*. In the generation in which the Chinese Azharites studied in Cairo, al-Azhar was dominated by the

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[706] In fact, it is possible that the continued use of *renzhu* as *tawhid* in Muslim publications in Japanese-occupied Manchuria helped normalize the equivalence of those two terms.

[707] To borrow Gesink's term, this is a "non-essentialist" history of *tawhid*. As Gesink observes with respect to Islamic modernist reforms in Egypt, "'they'—the opponents to reform—were not clearly distinct from the assumed 'us'—the reformers" (p. 5).

[708] Gesink, *Islamic Reform*, pp. 7, 66-68.

disciples of ‘Abduh such as Mustafa al-Maraghi, who tirelessly reproduced the modernist polemic on the pages of *Nur al-Islam*/*Majallat al-Azhar* as well as in stand-alone works.[709]

The modernist polemic tended to imagine similar antagonists to the *tawhid* polemic: Sufis, “traditionalists,” and “conservatives.”[710] The difference, of course, lay in the goals the two polemics saw themselves as serving. Up to the early twentieth century, those *ulama* who sought to preserve Sufi ways or who remained skeptical of a broadening definition of *ijtihad* (or the need for *ijtihad* at all) often did so not because they categorically feared change, but because they felt that the tried and true ways of Islam bore the agreement of generations of Muslims, and as such formed a basis for unity against the twin threats of imperialism and corrupting European-inspired lifeways. Modernists of course agreed that the preservation of Islam was the ultimate goal, but they differed on the means to reach it. The conservatives, alleged or self-identifying, argued that *ijtihad* promoted disagreement, and therefore could open opportunities for nefarious external or internal forces to divide Muslims against one another. To this, the modernists replied that the progress of Islam mattered as much as, and ultimately was the only guarantor of, its preservation. Progress in turn required the ability to embrace change and learn selectively from the advancements of other societies, all of which demanded exertion of *ijtihad*.

The modernist polemic of *ijtihad* carried certain implications. One of these was a broad embrace of science and innovation.[711] A second corollary concerned individual rights, cultural

[709] Mustafa al-Maraghi, *al-Ijtihad fi-l-Islam* [*Ijtihad in Islam*] (1959; written prior to 1945); Yusuf al-Dijwi, *al-Qawl al-sadid fi jawaz al-taqlid* [*The Final Word on Taqlid*] (1934).

[710] Gesink, *Islamic Reform*; Ghazal, “Sufism, Ijtihad, Modernity.”

[711] As Pang remarked in *Aiji jiunian*, “Science progresses at a rate of a thousand miles per day. It has made particularly great strides in recent years, such as the discovery of penicillin and atomic energy. As science becomes more advanced, people can lead better lives.” Nevertheless, Pang immediately qualified that science itself should also be limited by *ijtihad*: “Science must be used to improve human life, not to kill or injure it. The recent use of the atomic bomb against Japan cannot be condoned. The Quran says: “Fight in the way of God those who fight against you, but do not commit excesses. God does not like those who act excessively” (2:190). Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 88.

values, and questions of ideal political systems: Islamic modernists repeatedly asserted that Islam respected the rights (and even the equality) of women, that it was compatible with democratic and representative forms of government, and even that it was more peaceful than other religions.[712] Third and most crucially for the Chinese Muslims, the modernist polemic of *ijtihad* also implied new ways of imagining the past and processes of historical change. Vigorous *ijtihad* was cited as the cause of historical florescence, absence thereof as the cause of decline. As Pang said, "What we seek is a return to the golden age of Islam and Muslims," for, as the thinking went, the earliest Muslims were the most open to and skilled in the practice of *ijtihad*. As we have seen throughout this study, the temporal logic of "florescence" and "decline" had far-reaching consequences for Chinese Muslims, as for Muslims generally.[713]

Pang absorbed wholesale al-Azhar's modernist discourse of *ijtihad* (as "independent human reason"). In his memoir *Aiji jiunian* (*Nine Years in Egypt*, 1950), he stated boldly that "There is nothing in religion that cannot be understood rationally…In fact, we must use reason to understand religion fully."[714] Like his mentors at al-Azhar, Pang accepted that the use of *ijtihad* fell within a certain hierarchy. Reproducing a familiar formula, he explained to his Chinese readers that Islamic law proceeds on the basis of the Quran, then the Hadith, then consensus (Ar. *ijma'*; Ch. *jueyi*), then analogy (Ar. *qiyas*; Ch. *bilei*). Only after these are exhausted does Islam

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As noted in Chapter Four, the Northwest Propaganda Corps invoked the same Quranic passage in their September 1938 event in Xi'an, as did Ma Tianying in the English-language propaganda materials of the Near East Delegation, both of which condemned Japan's war as one of aggression and defended China's as self-defense.

[712] Muhammad Farid Wajdi, "The Caliphate and Democracy: A refutation of rumors on the nature of authority in the Umma and Islam," *Majallat al-Azhar*, 10, pp. 36-38; Muhammad Farid Wajdi, "Women in Islam," *Majallat al-Azhar* 8/2, p. 139.

[713] Virtually all Chinese Muslim histories reflected this logic, from Pang's *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, to Bai Shouyi's writings in *Yuehua*, to Hai Weiliang's *al-'Alaqat bayn al-'Arab wa-l-Sin*, to Na Zhong's translation of Ahmad Amin's trilogy *Fajr al-Islam* (1929), *Duha al-Islam* (1934-36), and *Zuhr al-Islam* (1961-62).

[714] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 72.

"call on people…to deliberate new information and analyze and deduce new principles."[715] Nevertheless, Pang adopted the relatively progressive view that the textual sources of Islamic law also existed in a dialectical relationship with reason, as he explained with respect to "Hadith and *ijtihad*":

> The authenticity of any given Hadith rests upon the authenticity of its transmission. In no way can its meaning alone, judged in isolation on its conformity with reason, be taken as the standard. That would be a pointless exercise…On the other hand, we cannot do without reason entirely. Non-Hanafis say Abu Hanifa used only seventeen Hadith. We care not whether this saying of theirs is correct or incorrect; it is a fact, however, that Abu Hanifa did not use very many Hadith. For this reason, outsiders label him as one of the "rationalists" [*lizhi pai*]. The legal precepts formulated by Abu Hanifa were based on Quran and Hadith, or at least adopted the principle of not violating Quran and Hadith. His most trusted methods were *qiyas* and *ijtihad* [*lizhi*].
>
> Dr. Muhammad Ghallab [*Anliangbu boshi*] told me his teacher was Sheikh al-Marsafi [*Mai'ersaifei zhangzhe*],[716] who was also a professor at al-Azhar. The excellent but modest Ahmad Amin [*Aihamode Aimin*] was also al-Marsafi's student. It is said al-Marsafi judged Hadith by their conformity with reason alone, without regard to their transmission.
>
> From these two cases, we can see that scholars ancient and modern both used reason as a means of judging Hadith. There are many other such figures. The literalist imitators [*mangcong de zimian pai*, i.e. *al-muqallidun*] are far too stubborn and inflexible. With time, they will discover on their own that they lack the means to resolve the issues of the day.[717]

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[715] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 77.

[716] Sayyid al-Marsafi (d.1931). Born in Cairo. Studied at al-Azhar, gaining the shahada in 1893. His work is considered an extension of his kin, Sheikh Hussein al-Marsafi. Considered a figure in the modern literary nahda. Taught Arabic for a time. In 1913, appointed as a musahhih at the Dar al-Kutub al-Masriyya. Returned to al-Azhar to teach in the 1910s. In 1924, became a member of Hay'at Kibar al-'Ulama. Source: Azhar Memory (http://alazharmemory.eg/sheikhs/characterdetails.aspx?id=169).

Al-Marsafi was 'Abduh's choice to be nominated for a vacancy on the Azhar Administrative Council in the late 1890s. Gesink, *Islamic Reform*, p. 132.

[717] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 72. The relationship could also be inverted, with scripture being construed to support reason. Pang elsewhere declared that "In the Quran, there are forty-nine verses that encourage human beings to use reason. There are many such statements in Hadith as well. Every ruling in Islamic law proceeds from both scriptural and rational proofs." Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 88.

In contrast to his statement in *al-Sin wa-l-Islam* that the pious forebears (*al-salaf al-salih*) were the most capable practitioners of *ijtihad*, Pang in *Aiji jiunian* expressed greater confidence in human beings' ability to employ reason:

> When the Prophet Muhammad sent Mu'izz to Yemen to propagate the faith, he asked him: 'By what means will you govern them?' Mu'izz replied: 'By the Quran.' The Prophet Muhammad continued: 'And if you encounter that for which the Quran does not provide?' Mu'izz replied: 'By the Hadith.' The Prophet Muhammad asked again: 'And if you encounter that for which the Hadith do not provide?' Mu'izz replied: 'By virtue of my own judgement and understanding.' To which the Prophet Muhammad said: 'Correct.'" Modern people see these statements merely as a relic of the past, believing that only the early generations possessed the capacity to analyze and deduce, that "after the fourth century AH, the gate of analysis and deduction was closed," and that after that, there was only blind imitation of the ancients. But there are many things that simply did not exist in ancient times. So what is to be done? To adopt the ways of the ancients and no more is to forsake Islam and its law.[718]

This last statement was radical even by some modernist standards. While the discourse of *ijtihad* often elevated the earliest generations of Islam, the *salaf*, as paragons of *ijtihad*, here Pang used *ijtihad* as a basis for rejecting the Salafi impulse. Islam, by its nature, and by virtue of the nature of the universe, must move continually forward, and the only way to accomplish this was through the consistent application of human reason. Pang was increasingly equating *ijtihad* with Islam itself.

As is already apparent, Pang increasingly grew beyond being a mere passive recipient and partisan of *ijtihad* or of its scientific, historical, or political implications. Rather, he became a theorist of it in his own right, especially as concerned the fundamental questions facing Islam and Muslims in China. Pang's application of *ijtihad* to the Chinese context shows through especially in his discussion of the "Ikhwanis" (Ch. *Yihewani pai*) in the final section of *Aiji jiunian*. China, Pang says, "already had divisions of sect before the formation of Ma Laichi's

[718] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 78.

Huasi order and Ma Mingxin's Jahriyya order—but these were all fairly minor." Even with the Huasi and Jahriyya orders, when their members occasionally moved eastward into Henan and Shandong, "the differences between them and the majority of Muslims have diminished."[719] According to Pang, only Ma Wanfu's Ikhwani movement, beginning in the 1890s, sparked lasting divisions. Ma Wanfu, Pang says, was "of the opinion that many of the ideas and practices of China's Muslims were in violation of the sharia." Pang specifies that Ma's movement, known as the "Newest Teaching" (*Xin xin jiao*), sought to reform over thirty aspects of Islamic practice.[720]

Pang took each of these areas one by one, demonstrating concisely and by various methods—historical anecdotes, quotations from scripture, and so on—how the positions of the Ikhwanis lacked imagination and common sense, and how *ijtihad* could lead quite easily to superior approaches. For example, Pang recalled that some years earlier, Muslims in Shaanxi Province had been participating in the trafficking of opium, on the basis that certain old textual sources such as "Shami" (i.e. *Sharh Durr al-Mukhtar*, a work of *fiqh* by Ibn 'Abidin, a.k.a. al-Shami, 1198–1252AH/1783–1836AD) permitted the buying and selling of narcotic products despite forbidding their consumption by Muslims. Pang observed that "if al-Shami were to have seen the conditions of opium use in China, he would have known that its effects are even worse than those of alcohol, which is clearly forbidden." Furthermore, Pang mentioned that a certain Imam Fu Pingma employed controversial yet effective measures to curb opium production, trafficking, and consumption in the Northwest. In approaching both the textual and the historical

[719] Ibid., p. 97.

[720] Ibid., p. 98. The most important of these concerned (1) the problem of reciting the Quran and receiving reward (2) funerals (3) raising a finger during prayer (4) "becoming suddenly tense after performing *du'a*" (5) growing a beard (6) prayer (7) women covering their heads (8) commemorating the Prophet (9) recitation of the Quran (10) opium and morphine (11) the problem of wearing white (12) the problem of observing the moon (e.g. to know when to begin Eid).

questions, Pang transforms *ijtihad* into an instrument for reconciling Islamic principles with the realities of a given sociocultural context.

The same type of reasoning could apply to questions of ritual. With respect to recitation of the Quran, Pang said that the Ikhwanis placed great stress on "correct" pronunciation. While acknowledging that recitation of course follows certain rules, Pang nevertheless says that it does not make sense to emphasize pronunciation at the expense of listeners' comprehension. The Imam al-Ghazali himself, Pang points out, wrote that it was incorrect to emphasize recite style entirely at the expense of comprehension of meaning. In other words, *ijtihad* ensures sensitivity to the specificities of context (in this case, the differing accents of Muslims from different lands) and helps establish priorities (above all, the text must be understood).[721]

Pang made two immediate recommendations with a mind toward introducing more widespread use of *ijtihad* throughout China's Muslim communities. The first was to improve Chinese Muslim publishing and translation activities by establishing a "Publishing and Translation Commission."[722] While complimenting exceptional publishing pioneers such as Zhao Zhenwu, Pang noted that even though the population of Muslims in China runs in the tens of millions, the number of translated books is very small—no more than three or four hundred. A "complete and well-ordered collection" (*zhengbu congshu*) of Islamic works translated into Chinese would encourage Chinese Muslims' ability to confront challenges in a reasoned manner. Second, Pang proposed a systematic reform of *hailifan* (i.e. mosque instructor-assistants)

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[721] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 107.

[722] This idea was almost surely based on Ahmad Amin's *Ladjnat al-ta'lif wa l-tardjama wa-l-nashr* ("Committee on Composition, Translation, and Publication"). See Emmanuelle Perrin, 《Le creuset et l'orfèvre : le parcours d'Ahmad Amîn (1886-1954)》 *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* [En ligne], 95-98, avril 2002, mis en ligne le 12 mai 2009, consulté le 18 février 2018. URL : http://journals.openedition.org/remmm/238.

education in China. Pang recommended attaching a school to every mosque in China; educating *hailifan* in Chinese, Arabic, and the Islamic sciences with a standardized curriculum along modernist lines (presumably based on that of al-Azhar); administering a single nation-wide exam for the *hailifan*; and sending the most accomplished for further study in Cairo. He estimated that forty new schools in China's major cities and provincial capitals could train three thousand new *hailifan* at a time.[723] It is impossible to know whether such a plan would have strengthened Chinese Muslim communities in the manner Pang envisioned, however, for he returned to China in the midst of the GMD-CCP civil war, and the rest of his life was marked by attempts to safeguard Islam under the new Communist regime.

Conclusion: Islamic Modernism's Lost Generation

The Chinese Azharites arrived in Cairo at the precise moment when nation-state nationalism was irrevocably taking hold across the Islamic world and beyond, and when the Second World War already loomed on the horizon. Nevertheless, they appeared on the scene as unlikely yet fervent latter-day claimants to the inheritance of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad ʻAbduh, Rashid Rida, Shakib Arslan, and others who maintained that the affinities of Islam and the East represented the "firmest bond," and that nations and nationalism, even in China, could be made to coexist with rather than supplant what they perceived to be this timeless truth.

Indeed, the Chinese Azharites' studies in Cairo did not reflect exclusively hegemonic or Sino-centric motives. Rather, their non-hierarchical, *umma*-centric aspiration to know and feel connected to Islam and Muslims outside China persisted in its own right, sharpened by the anxiety of having been isolated from the larger Islamic world for five centuries. In light of these

[723] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 64; see also Pang Shiqian, "Quanguo qingzhensi hailifa jiaoyu gailiang chuyi [A Modest Proposal for Improving *Hailifan* Education in Mosques Nationwide]," *Yuehua* 16/4-6 (1944).

aspirations and anxieties, their time at al-Azhar allowed them to articulate and experience organic forms of Islamic unity that were not tied to territorial states or specific political projects (such as the re-establishment of the Caliphate). As far as al-Azhar was concerned, Islamic unity resided instead in correct thought, belief, and action; a common effort to master the Arabic language; and the pursuit of mutual knowledge and cooperation without regard to nation or race.

Nevertheless, from the perspective of the GMD state and its elite Muslim allies, the Chinese Azharites offered an alternative to top-down Sinicization and homogenization of China's frontier Muslims: that is, the Chinese Azharites could help deliver a more thorough, authentic, and authoritative Islamic modernist curriculum than any of their predecessors, backed by years of state-supported study in the Islamic world's most prestigious institution, and sealed with the Azhar *shahada*.

As Matsumoto Masumi has argued, Chinese Muslim elites felt that they could not criticize the Chinese state directly for intercommunal violence, Islamophobia, or Northwest Muslims' low standard of living. Instead, they had little choice but to internalize the responsibility for such issues, arguing that if only China's Muslims could be better educated, less insular and less backward, and more open to productive dialogue and coexistence with Han Chinese, their other problems would evaporate automatically. Building on the work of Chengda, the Four Great Imams, and Wang Haoran, the Chinese Azharites' deep study of Islamic modernist thought provided a sounder basis than ever for the position that *being better Muslims* was the solution to the social, political, and cultural challenges facing China's Muslims.

While the "reconciliation," "translation," or "synthesis" of Muslimness and Chineseness is always a tempting framework, evidence suggests that this was not primarily how the Chinese Azharites viewed their role. Unlike the Han Kitab authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth

centuries, the Chinese Azharites mostly did not frame Chinese Muslims' challenges ontologically. While it may be tempting to view the situation in such terms, the question of how to reconcile "Islam" and "China," or how to be Muslim and Chinese at the same time, was not the Chinese Azharites' primary concern—at least not directly. Of course, their mentors and colleagues in China did publish new editions of the Han Kitab works, and often described Islam in partly Confucian terms. On the whole, however, the Chinese Azharites and their associates at home adopted an alternative approach. In an era of rapid communication, mass media, and increased information about the outside world—and above all, nationalism—simply arguing that Islam *was Chinese* had become untenable; therefore, Chinese Muslim elites instead argued for Islam's compatibility with what they saw as the core principles a universal "modernity," principles they knew the GMD defended militantly: science, reason, and anti-superstition.

Egypt played a special role in this commitment to Islamic modernism and reason. Beyond the walls of al-Azhar or the writings of its sheikhs, the contest between two alternative visions of Egyptian nationalism—the narrower, Europeanist, territorial nation-statist one versus the broader, Easternist, Islamically inflected one—reached its peak and apparent resolution during the 1930s and 1940s, the same as the period of the Chinese Azharite delegations. Not surprisingly, the Chinese Azharites often found themselves associating with proponents of the latter view, which scholars argue became dominant in the 1930s.

Below that surface, however, it is important to note that the Islamic modernist polemic of reason the Chinese Azharites (especially Pang) adopted did not emerge only from al-Azhar itself, but also from the larger context of Cairo, Arab intellectuals, and the Arabic press. Even as formerly "Egyptianist" intellectuals turned toward an Islamo-Easternist orientation, however, they continued to insist on interpreting Islam as fundamentally rational, scientific, and modern.

For example, Muhammad Husayn Haykal stressed the Prophet's extraordinary capacities for reason in his biography *Hayat Muhammad*.[724] This was the grand compromise between the three poles of identity: nation-state nationalism could be repositioned to accommodate Islam, and Islam could be understood in a manner consistent with science, modernity, and reason—but science, modernity, and reason themselves were not required to budge. They remained absolute, ostensibly universal. In other words, a popularized version of Islamic modernism became the crucial mediator between territorial nationalism and more expansive identities through reference to an ostensibly unmovable universal modernity. From the Chinese Muslims' perspective, grasping and applying this point was far more important than any single text they read or translated while in Cairo.

Articulated in various ways by Egyptian intellectuals, Islamic activists, and the sheikhs of al-Azhar, the assertion of Islam's rationality mirrored and reaffirmed the distinction the Guomindang itself had made between "rational religion" and "irrational superstition." Whether in Arabic, Chinese, or otherwise, everyone was speaking the same language. In other words, the solution to the crisis of modern Chinese Muslim identity was broadly the same as the solution to the crisis of modern Egyptian identity, resting on the assertion of Islam's fundamental rationality and compatibility with modern science, and therefore, the possibility of its coexistence with nationalism, whose inherent modernity was already assumed.

One final observation must be made regarding the implications of *ijtihad*, particularly Pang's expansive vision of it. In the words of Indira Gesink,

> It can be argued that lay *ijtihad* mitigates the coercive power of the state. While a state may claim to promulgate the correct interpretation of religious sources, lay *ijtihad* puts the tools of alternative interpretation and resistance into the hands of every individual. Individuals could circumvent restrictions imposed by the frozen

[724] Gershoni and Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation*.

> juristic past through lay *ijtihad*…Taken to its logical conclusion, the modernists' version of lay *ijtihad* constituted a democratization of religious knowledge that would motivate against arbitrary exercise of power.[725]

While perhaps less than obvious, the above statement could apply just as easily to China's GMD government and its elite Muslim allies as to any government or group of obstinate *ulama* in a Muslim country. We know from Pang's brief but unambiguous statements in *al-Sin wa-l-Islam*, quoted at the head of this chapter, that he was skeptical of the blunt integrationist approach toward China's Muslims being taken by Da Pusheng and other high-level Muslim figures close to the GMD. As argued in Chapter Two, politically and militarily minded men such as Da, Tang Kesan, Bai Chongxi, Ma Hongkui, Chen Lifu, and Chiang Kai-shek were not only attempting to Sinicize frontier Muslim populations, but also to tell them what forms of Islam would and would not be sanctioned. In advocating an expansive, continuous, and democratized *ijtihad*, sensitive to the particular conditions of Muslims in China, perhaps Pang was seeking not to transform China's Muslims according to some predetermined image, but rather to empower them to critique and resist impositions and intrusions by any form of authority, political or religious, trying to tell them what "correct" version of Islam to believe and practice. While not all the Chinese Azharites shared his views, Pang clearly felt that a top-down nationalized Islam on the one hand, or a similarly dogmatic upstart Salafi scripturalism on the other, would be equally unsuitable for China's Muslims.

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[725] Gesink, *Islamic Reform and Conservatism*, p. 234.

CHAPTER SIX: RETURN OR EXILE

> China today is starting on the path to democracy. But it would appear that it does not yet have a suitable manner of dealing with its several million Muslims. It continues to follow oppressive and guarded policies that the future will not vindicate. In the recent war of resistance, Muslims made many sacrifices for their country. But what of their rights? No matter, rights are to be claimed, not simply given. At the San Francisco conference, all parties had equal representation, yet Muslims were kept from participating. In the upcoming Republican Congress, I fear Muslims will not be allowed to choose representatives in proportion to their numbers. The Communists' minority nationalities policy appears correct; clear-headed people might give it some consideration.
> -Pang Shiqian, "The Question of Muslim Representation," late 1940s[726]

> *Preparation of Arabic Coffee*. Boil water. One spoon of coffee to be put in water and left until completely desolved [sic]. Add cardamom, qwantity [sic] to be slightly more than coffee. Mixture to be boiled a few minutes.
> -Ma Tianying, personal diary entry, in English, Ipoh, Malaysia, April 1964[727]

Introduction: End and Beginning

On 1 October 1949, Mao Zedong announced the establishment of the People's Republic of China at Tiananmen in Beijing. That same day, however, a very different set of circumstances was unfolding among the remaining GMD forces eight hundred miles to the south. From his base in Hengyang, Hunan, Bai Chongxi—Chiang Kai-shek's army chief of staff since 1927, a hero of the war with Japan, and minister of war from 1946 to 1948—telegrammed the Central China Military Command Office at the GMD's soon-to-be-abandoned headquarters in Guangzhou with an urgent secret message for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the midst of preparing for the final defense of his home province of Guangxi, Bai took time to reaffirm his support for a

[726] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 40.

[727] Ma Tianying: MTY.C9 C100002.20: From MTY's diary, part II: 19 April 1964.

proposal to dispatch a six-member "Chinese Islamic Near and Middle East Delegation" (*Zhongguo huijiao jinzhongdong fangwentuan*).[728]

Since entrenching in Hengyang in August, Bai had been communicating about the proposed mission with the GMD central authorities and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Guangzhou, who in turn had been in touch with GMD consulates in Kabul, Ankara, Tehran, and Cairo. Bai said the mission called for "a Muslim possessing considerable experience in foreign relations" and on 24 September recommended Wang Zengshan for the job, citing his studies in Istanbul in the 1920s and leadership of the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation of 1937-39. In addition to Wang, who was working for the Republican government in Xinjiang and had agreed to head the delegation on 8 September, the delegation would include a number of other familiar figures: Wu Jianxun, who had served with the 1939-41 South Seas Delegation; Na Zhong, the former Azharite; and three others. Their itinerary would take them to twelve cities in eleven countries over a period of sixty days: Cairo, Mecca, Sanaa, Amman, Beirut, Damascus, Istanbul, Ankara, Tehran, Baghdad, Karachi, and Kabul. They would leave from and return to Guangzhou via Hong Kong. They requested a total budget of 50,000 USD. In addition to stipends and living and travel expenses, this budget would provide 18,500 USD for banquets and tea parties, as well as 3,000 USD for printing equipment and fees in order to produce propaganda materials in English, Arabic, and Turkish. The GMD and Chinese Muslim leaders clearly felt that the model of the wartime Near East and South Seas delegations was worth reproducing.

While the personnel and itinerary would resemble earlier delegations, however, the purpose of this one was new.[729] Both Bai and the MFA talked about the mission, and relations

[728] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives 11-WAA-00004.

[729] Actually, it was not entirely new. Anti-communism did arise as a topic of discussion from time to time in the meetings of the wartime Near East and South Seas Delegations.

with Muslim countries in general, almost exclusively in terms of "strengthening the front against international Communism."[730] In his communications with the central authorities and MFA, Bai had stressed that Pakistan in particular had emerged since the 1947 Partition as an important anti-Communist force in the Islamic world. Notably, all eleven countries on the Delegation's proposed itinerary counted, for now, as ones skeptical of or openly opposed to the Soviet Union. Ten years down the road, that would no longer be true for half of them—a dramatic turn whose effects would deal a great blow to the Chinese Muslims in Taiwan. But that is getting ahead of the story.

Due to the CCP's victory on the mainland and the GMD's evacuation to Taiwan, the proposed fall 1949 delegation never actually set sail. At the same time, however, the planning for it reflected the new world in which Chinese Muslims found themselves. As Bai wrote, a new set of realities was taking shape for China, the Islamic world, Chinese Muslims, and global geopolitics. The resumption of the Chinese Civil War from 1945 to 1949, the CCP takeover of the mainland, the founding of the People's Republic, the Guomindang's move to Taiwan, and the consolidation of those two new states over the subsequent decade thrust hard choices upon Chinese Muslims, as it did in one way or another for everyone in the country. To remain in mainland China (or to return, in the case of the diplomats and Azharites) meant uncertainty due to the unstable military situation and due to communism's opposition, in theory, to all religion. To leave meant accepting and adapting to exile in Taiwan or, in many cases, in various Muslim or non-Muslim countries throughout Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas. Of course, the reasons for choosing one or the other were not necessarily ideological. Family reasons, financial reasons, and sometimes pure accident played a role. Except for those Chinese Muslims who were

[730] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives 11-WAA-00004.

immediately employed by the GMD government and for whom staying in China would have meant prison or death, we cannot speculate about motives in any comprehensive way, but merely seek to understand the variety of results.

What is clear is that each of these options—returning to China, moving to Taiwan, or relocating to a third country—placed new demands on Chinese Muslim identity that were not entirely dissimilar to the challenges they faced at the birth of the Republic or after the consolidation of power by the GMD during the Nanjing Decade. In one sense, the ruptures of 1945-49 meant that there was no longer a single Chinese Muslim identity, if such a thing had ever existed. Additional fragmentations occurred, furthermore, within each of the three aforementioned options.

If one left, was it better to move to Taiwan or to a Muslim country? The GMD's special relationship with Chinese Muslim leaders meant that Taiwan perhaps represented the easiest path for one to remain both fully "Chinese" and fully "Muslim"—the cost, however, being the loss of one's native land. Yet the GMD's nationalism, while by definition not as destructive as the Mainland's communism, also carried clear prescriptions for what Islam could and could not be. By contrast, living in a Muslim country surely offered the opportunity to experience Islam in new ways previously available only to the lucky few who could travel or study there. Yet it almost as surely meant feeling isolated and perhaps being left out of state and society.

If one remained in China, was it better to keep one's head low, or to work actively for the state or state-sponsored Islamic institutions and promote a vision of compatibility between Islam and Communism? In terms of basic security, the cost of doing so lay in the risk that the Party might become more rigid in its ideology and more aggressive toward perceived enemies—which is precisely what happened beginning in the Anti-Rightist Campaign of 1958 and continuing

through the Cultural Revolution. As with other groups, many Muslims were persecuted or killed, as religion was considered inherently reactionary and contrary to the state's projects.

By the 1960s, Chinese Muslims in Taiwan and the Mainland, many of whom had worked and studied side by side for decades, were completely cut off from one another. Both groups were increasingly cut off from the Islamic world as well: as countries across Asia and the Middle East gained independence from European empires, each tended to follow its own path and to circumscribe the political role of Islamic internationalism. In the three main scenarios for Chinese Muslims described above—Taiwan, Mainland, or exile—ideology, Cold War, decolonization, and nation-statism placed inescapable constraints on what Islam, or at least public Islam, could and could not be.

Keeping Islam Anti-Communist: Chinese Muslims in Taiwan Fight for Relevance

The Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45) and the renewed Chinese Civil War (1945-49) coincided with a partial generational shift for the urban coastal elites of the Chinese Muslim community. Zhao Zhewu, the editor of *Yuehua*, died prematurely in wartime Beijing in 1938, at age forty-three. Soon thereafter, Imam Ha Decheng died in 1943 in Shanghai, also Japanese-occupied territory, only a few years after he had helped the GMD and his fellow Chinese Muslim leaders to stall Tang Yichen's Japanese-sponsored Hajj delegation (see Chapter Four). Imam Wang Jingzhai died in Guiyang in early 1949, where he had traveled to visit his daughter and seek medical treatment.[731] Tang Kesan—deputy of the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission, co-managing director of the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation, and dean of

[731] *Zhongguo huizu mingren cidian* [*Dictionary of Chinese Muslim Personages*] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1995), p. 303.

Chengda Academy—died in Nanjing in 1950. With the possible exception of Zhao Zhenwu, all of these men would probably have attempted to escape to Taiwan with the GMD government and most of the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation leaders if they had been younger and in better health, but it is impossible to say.

In the Northwest, the Ma warlords' forces put up some of the staunchest resistance encountered anywhere by the People's Liberation Army (PLA). While the eventual result was defeat or defection, in some cases this resistance extended well into the 1950s.[732] The Northwest's two leading Chinese Muslim figures, however, left China well before that point. Qinghai governor Ma Bufang, whose stronghold at Xining had remained relatively unscathed during the war, had come to receive significant material support from the U.S. military and CIA; one could argue that he was the United States' earliest Muslim strongman client. Ma escaped from Xining to Hong Kong in early October 1949. Rather than relocating to Taiwan, he proceeded into exile with approximately two hundred of his kin and associates, first making the Hajj, then settling temporarily in Cairo from 1950 to 1957 (where his children received Arabic tutoring from Hai Weiliang). Ma was acting in a semi-official capacity while in Egypt, so when Egypt recognized the People's Republic of China in May 1956, Taiwan made Ma its ambassador to Saudi Arabia. Ma served in this post from 1957 until 1961, when he was dismissed "on charges of corruption and incompetence." Ma lived in Saudi Arabia until his death in 1975, and

[732] The political and military details of this ongoing struggle are presented at length in Andrew D.W. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: A Political History of Republican Sinkiang, 1911-1949* (Cambridge UP, 1986), Ch. 7. These developments were also followed at the time in the U.S. media, for example: Walter Sullivan, "Moslem Generals to Fight On," *New York Times*, 8 April 1949, p. 13; "Foreign News: The Northwest Falls," *Time*, 3 October 1949; "Chinese Moslem Head Says War Will Go On," *Montreal Gazette*, 10 January 1951. Reported from Cairo, the last piece described Ma Bufang as saying "China's 50,000,000 Moslems never will be reconciled to Communist control of the country."

did not "return" to Taiwan.[733] Meanwhile, Ma Hongkui, governor of Ningxia and cousin of Ma Bufang, also escaped China in 1950 and resettled in Los Angeles (he had visited the United States previously for medical treatment), where he became a horse rancher and indulged his taste for ice cream up to his death in 1970.[734]

The Uyghur leaders connected to the GMD government faced a variety of fates during the CCP takeover. Isa Yusuf Alptekin (see Chapter Four), a former leader of the First East Turkistan Republic (1933-34) and later GMD agent, returned to Xinjiang after the war and opposed the Second East Turkistan Republic (1944-46) on the grounds that it was a Soviet puppet; as the PLA approached Urumqi, he fled over the mountains to Kashmir and eventually resettled in Turkey. Muhammad Amin Bughra, another leader of the First East Turkistan Republic, was appointed by Chiang Kai-shek in December 1948 as vice-chair of the GMD's Xinjiang provincial government, also charged with the task of opposing communist influence there. Muhammad Amin Bughra's superior was Burhan Shahidi, who became chair of the Xinjiang provincial government in January 1949. Despite sometimes espousing anti-Soviet views, Burhan Shahidi decided to remain in China and was responsible for announcing Xinjiang's surrender to the PLA in late September 1949. In the early 1950s, he also became a

[733] Merrill Ruth Hunsberger, "Ma Pu-fang in Chinghai Province, 1931-1949 (PhD dissertation, Temple University, 1978), p. 200; Howard Boorman, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, Vol. 2 (New York: Columbia UP, 1967), pp. 474-75; Hyeju Jeong, "A Song of the Red Sea: Communities and Networks of Chinese Muslims in the Hijaz," *Dirasat* (Shawwal 1437/July 2016): pp. 11, 16. The reasons for Ma's dismissal as ambassador to Saudi Arabia are noted in Boorman and cited in Hunsberger.

Hyeju Janice Jeong has found that Ma Bufang "had maintained amiable relations with Saudi King 'Abdul 'Aziz even before [his family's] migration in 1949." She has also found that the Ma family was responsible for the accommodations for Chinese Muslim Hajjis in Mecca: "The first of the two…was built in the 1920s through the endowments of Ma Fuxiang and Ma Hongkui…This building was eventually demolished with the expansion of the Grand Mosque. The second hajj lodge house, which is still in use, was constructed thanks to the endowment of Hussein Ma Bufang at some point after his migration." Jeong, "Song of the Red Sea," p. 16.

[734] "Chinese Warlord," *LIFE Magazine 25/18*, 1 November 1948, p. 58; Ma Hongkui, *Ma Shaoyun huiyi lu* [*Memoirs of Ma Shaoyun*] (Hong Kong: Wenyi shushi, 1984), pp. 304-05.

founder of the Chinese Islamic Association in Beijing, cementing collaboration between Uyghurs and key Chinese Muslim figures who had remained in the PRC (see below). Finally, Masud Sabri, the third leader of the First East Turkistan Republic, had relocated to Nanjing following the defeat of the short-lived state, becoming a member of the GMD government; he also preceded Burhan Shahidi as chair of the Xinjiang provincial government.[735] At least as far back as Feburary 1937, Masud Sabri and five associates had submitted a petition to the GMD parliament noting that "Europeans and Americans see Islam as a potential bulwark against communism." He therefore proposed the creation of "exploratory delegations" (*kaocha tuan*) that could be sent to "all Muslim countries" to strengthen China's ties with them on an anti-communist basis, as well as to pursue cultural cooperation and support the "anticolonial struggle…of weak nations such as Turkey, Arabia, Iran, India, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Egypt."[736] Masud Sabri may therefore have been the first person to come up with the idea of Chinese Muslim diplomatic delegations, before the outbreak of the war, and partly for anti-communist reasons. Nevertheless, in 1949 he chose to remain in Xinjiang, where he was imprisoned and died in 1952.

With the Ma warlords effectively out of the picture and with the GMD government's most prominent former Uyghur allies electing not to move with it, Bai Chongxi was left as the sole figurehead of the Chinese Muslims in Taiwan. Bai was politically handicapped, of course, having fallen out with Chiang Kai-shek in 1948 after supporting Li Zongren for the vice-presidency over Sun Fo, son of Sun Yat-sen, and the favored choice of Chiang—which cost Bai

[735] Biographical information compiled from Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*; Brophy, *Uyghur Nation*; Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*.

[736] "Qing queding fangzhen yu shijie huijiao guojia fasheng miqie guanxi an [Confirming Policy Guidelines for Developing Closer Relations with the World's Muslim Countries]," KMT Party Archives (Taipei), Parliamentary Collection 5.2/157.55. Co-signatories to Masud Sabri's petition included Shi Zizhou of the future Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation, who later escaped to Taiwan with the GMD and Chinese Muslim leaders.

his position as minister of war. The specter of further marginalization, however, appears to have motivated Bai in his work on Chinese Muslim issues. For most of the 1950s, Bai energetically sought to galvanize the Chinese Muslims on Taiwan under the banner of anti-communism. As Bai's own record carrying out the 1927 Shanghai Massacre suggests (see Chapter Two), anti-communism was by no means a new cause for the Chinese Muslim elites. After 1949, however, anti-communism became fused to an unprecedented extent with public articulations of Taiwanese Chinese Muslim identity. Through the Chinese Islamic Federation (*Zhongguo huijiao xiehui*)—the new name of the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation after the war, including after the move to Taiwan—Bai and his longtime associates Sun Shengwu and Shi Zizhou tirelessly propagated a conception of Chinese Muslims as some of Taiwan's most dedicated Cold Warriors.[737]

With Bai's support, and despite brief interruptions in 1949-50 as the GMD was forced to vacate "China's" diplomatic installations around the world, several members of the slightly younger group of former Chinese Azharites and former Near East and South Seas Delegation soon regained stable employment as diplomats of Taiwan. Hai Weiliang, for example, found himself out of his job as a GMD diplomat in New Delhi, which is why he temporarily moved to Cairo in 1950 and came into contact there with Ma Bufang (Hai also took advantage of the interruption to finally publish his Arabic-language work, *al-'Alaqat bayn al-'Arab wa-l-Sin*, the product of research begun in the 1930s at the Lucknow Nadwa and at al-Azhar). Nevertheless, Hai was eventually reemployed as a Taiwanese diplomat from the mid-1950s to the late 1980s, at which point he retired to Taiwan despite not having lived there before.[738] Like Hai, other

[737] Sun Shengwu, *Huijiao luncong*.

[738] Chen, "Islam's Loneliest Cosmopolitan."

Chinese Azharites such as Na Zhong and Ding Zhongming continued to work as both scholars and diplomats, with Ding serving for a time as ambassador to Libya. The situation was simplest for those in countries that did not recognize the PRC for the time being, such as Wang Shiming in Saudi Arabia, who simply remained in their posts. Others, however, followed more eventful paths: toward the end of the war, Wu Jianxun of the wartime South Seas Delegation was sent as a representative of the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Association to India, where he was briefly arrested in Calcutta under unclear circumstances, but eventually returned to Taiwan following India's partition with the help of the GMD Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[739]

The question for the Chinese Muslims in Taiwan, however, was not merely how to secure their material well-being as individuals, but how to ensure the ongoing relevance of their interwar and wartime vision of Islamic transnationalism, or transnationalist integrationism, to Taiwan's international relations. For the decades in which the GMD held power on the Mainland, the state's perceived imperative to retain control of the Northwest frontiers provided the Chinese Muslim elites an all-encompassing logic that could justify almost any cultural undertaking they could imagine, from education reform, to the Fu'ad Library, to study at al-Azhar. While the war with Japan placed an even more acute pressure on Chinese Muslims to conform to the state's political priorities, the imperative of frontier integration and development predated the war, persisted during it, shaped it, and ultimately outlived it. The Northwest frontiers did remain as a sort of phantom limb for the GMD and the Chinese Muslim elites in Taiwan as long as Northwest Muslims continued to resist the PLA and as long as Chiang Kai-shek and his government still entertained the possibility of launching a "counter-offensive" on

[739] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 020-011908-0026.

the Mainland. In some ways, this dynamic persisted for a very long time: most significantly, the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission, relocated to Taiwan with the rest of the government, was only defunded in 2017—by which point an increasingly "Taiwan"-centered rather than "China"-centered Taiwanese nationalism had long wondered aloud why the institution was still necessary. Overall, however, the Northwest frontiers ceased to provide a concrete rationale for political and cultural action on the part of Chinese Muslim leaders in Taiwan in the 1950s. Confined to their tiny island, and with realistic hopes of retaking the Mainland slipping away, the only hope for Bai Chongxi and his associates to retain their former influence was to try to make their brand of Islamic politics and diplomacy useful not to frontier governance, but to the task, much larger still, of combating global communism.

Bai Chongxi embarked on this rearticulation of purpose shortly after resettling in Taiwan. In August 1951, he published a brief tract titled *A Work Plan of the Chinese Islamic Federation* (*Zhongguo huijiao xiehui gongzuo jiyao*). In it, he first presented a (very) long list of Chinese Muslims' contributions to the war effort against Japan, including:

(1) The Northwest Propaganda Corps
(2) The Near East, Hajj, and South Seas Delegations
(3) Direct enlistment in the military
(4) Supporting industrial production
(5) Supporting education reform (Bai singled out the Chengda Academy, Sun Shengwu's Northwest School, and Da Pusheng's Shanghai Islamic Normal School by name)
(6) Receiving Chiang Kai-shek's 1939 "Northwest Morale" mission
(7) Providing intelligence from enemy territory
(8) Establishing the Pingmin Hospital in Chongqing
(9) Rebuilding the Chongqing Mosque
(10) Mobilizing the Chinese Muslim Youth Association (Bai singled out Xue Wenbo, Zhang Zhaoli, and Wang Mengyang by name)
(11) Making recommendations to the GMD government and to Muslim countries regarding the formation of cooperative organizations
(12) Carrying out diplomatic relations (Bai singled out "the Chinese Muslims who studied in Egypt and Turkey")

(13) Sending students to Egypt and Turkey (it is significant that Bai saw this as a contribution to the war effort separate from No. 12)
(14) Completing the formation of a national Islamic association
(15) Completing the translation of [Islamic] classics[740]

In light of the overall argument of this study, it is especially significant that Bai identified Chinese Muslims' educational and intellectual activities, both in and outside China, as ones that had contributed directly to the war effort. Now, from the perspective of the early 1950s, Bai argued that such activities, along with political and diplomatic contributions, were equally ones that could help the Taiwanese GMD in its ongoing struggle with the CCP. Bai commended Chinese Muslims for joining the GMD on Taiwan, and proposed

(1) Dispatching new overseas delegations
(2) Sending representatives to participate in international Islamic conferences
(3) Disseminating anti-communist propaganda to all Muslim countries
(4) "Elaborating religious doctrines…in order to increase the moral power of religion to oppose communism"
(5) Supporting the "Islamic world" in its advocacy efforts regarding certain contested territories, including Palestine, Kashmir, Hyderabad, Eritrea, Somaliland, and Junagadh[741]

The fifth item stands out in particular for its expansiveness given the Taiwanese government's limited capacity. This ambitious proposal indicates Bai's confidence in his elite Chinese Muslim associates' abilities to navigate complex issues of Islamic and international politics. At the same time, it also suggests the great lengths to which Bai was now willing to go in order to preserve a place for Chinese Muslims in Taiwan's international relations: if the GMD were to be pulled into international conflicts over Palestine or Kashmir, the Chinese Muslim elites would be the only people on Taiwan qualified to show the way forward.

[740] Bai Chongxi, *Zhongguo huijiao xiehui gongzuo jiyao* (Taipei: Zhongguo huijiao xiehui, 1951), pp. 1-13.

[741] Bai, *Zhongguo huijiao xiehui jiyao*, pp. 14-21.

Bai added that it would be especially important to focus on relations with Egypt, "for it is the international center of Islam, and shares a close cultural relationship with our country" (he could not have anticipated that in less than a year, Egypt's July 1952 Free Officers' Revolution would set the country on a path toward the Soviet camp). In addition to Egypt, Pakistan mattered greatly as well. In Bai's words, although Pakistan had "due to particular circumstances" already recognized the PRC (becoming the first Muslim country to do so), he hoped that the young nation could be persuaded to restore relations with the GMD government on Taiwan. Bai hinted that the reason for his optimism had to do not only with Pakistan's Islamic character, but more specifically with certain "Muslim members of the former military government of Xinjiang," who had escaped the advancing PLA by braving the high mountain passes and crossing into Pakistan. Some of these individuals, Bai said, would proceed from Pakistan to Taiwan to assist the GMD government, while others could be deployed directly to carry out the GMD's work in a variety of Muslim countries.[742]

The following month, Bai followed up on his *Work Plan* by delivering a radio address "to the Muslim world" that among other things drew attention in the U.S. media. In the address, Bai solidified several points that he hoped would form a new political consensus for the Chinese Muslims in Taiwan. First, he encouraged Muslims to "steer clear of India's Premier Jawaharlal Nehru," whom he accused of being "blind to Soviet imperialism, foolish and arrogant, and having ulterior designs on Kashmir." Bai also claimed that the "Russian imperialist ogre" Stalin, and his "Chinese henchman Mao Tze-tung," were seeking to engineer a third world war. Significantly, Bai claimed that he "spoke in the name of 50,000,000 Chinese [Muslims]," and urged all Muslims "regardless of race or nationality" to be "prepared to fight shoulder to

[742] Bai, *Zhongguo huijiao xiehui jiyao*, pp. 15-17.

shoulder alongside the Western democracies."[743] The fact that Bai would so forcefully assert the anti-communist credentials of all Chinese Muslims, including those still living on the Mainland, suggests that he actually believed his ideas could make a difference to the outcome of the GMD-CCP struggle and the fate of those Muslims; if he had been privately resigned to the new reality of the PRC's existence, he may have been more reluctant to speak in a manner that would so clearly endanger his coreligionists remaining on the Mainland. On the other hand, the entire GMD leadership was understandably slow to overcome denial.

The community of elite Chinese Muslims on Taiwan was already implementing many of these proposals before Bai even announced them. In 1951, much as Da Pusheng and Ha Decheng had done in the 1930s, the Chinese Islamic Association member Chang Zixuan issued a series of radio broadcasts titled "Twelve Lectures on Islamic Doctrine" (*Huijiao jiaoyi shi'er jiang*). The printed version of these lectures, published in book form, were endorsed by General Yan Xishan, who the previous year had briefly served as premier of the Republic of China. Though not an imam—as we will see, most of the imams stayed on the Mainland—Chang used scriptural evidence to present Islam's positions on topics such as patriotism, seeking knowledge, peace, public service, obedience, industriousness, helping others, and last but not least, "wealth and capital" (*fuyou zicai*). This last lecture discussed the portions of the *Surat al-Baqara* regarding the practice of *sadaqa* (charity) in Islam, demonstrating that Islam supported both individual wealth and common welfare, and organically linked the two.[744] In their choice of topics, scriptural excerpts, and interpretations, Chang's lectures carefully portrayed Islamic doctrines as being inherently anti-communist, or at least as being more compatible with Chinese nationalism

[743] "Moslems Urged to Resist Russia," *Christian Science Monitor*, 25 September 1951, p. 11.

[744] Quran 2:177.

according to the GMD. At the same time, Chang's argument mirrored a much broader debate across the Islamic world at this time as to whether, or to what extent, Islamic economic thinking represented a middle ground between capitalism and communism.[745]

The Chinese Civil War and the GMD's move to Taiwan, an epoch-making rupture in so many other ways, nevertheless did not fundamentally alter the Chinese Muslim elites' approach to its relationship with the GMD government. On Taiwan, the Chinese Muslims' growing anti-communist initiatives involved a different message but the same media compared with their activities before 1949. This makes some sense. To be sure, the discourses and practices that had characterized public Islam in Republican China had to an extent become habit, even second nature, by the late 1940s. At the same time, because anti-communism did not go hand-in-hand with domestic political openness or democracy during Taiwan's first forty years under GMD rule, political conformity remained nearly as important for the Chinese Muslims as it had been during the Nanjing Decade and the war years. Having argued at great length and with great sophistication that Islam was compatible with Chinese nationalism, GMD frontier nation-building, or anti-Japanese resistance, the Chinese Muslims on Taiwan now deployed the same rhetorical tools to demonstrate why Islam was anti-communist.

This required some recovery of Chinese Muslims' intellectual and material capacities: few if any of their Republican-era publications had survived the relocation to Taiwan; *Yuehua*, for instance, returned to Beiping following the world war, ceased printing in 1948 due to the civil war. In conjunction with Bai Chongxi's proposals, however, the Chinese Islamic Federation began publishing a montly in 1952 under the Chinese title *Chinese Islamic Federation Bulletin*

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[745] Chang Zixuan, *Huijiao jiaoyi shi'er jiang* [*Twelve Lectures on Islamic Doctrine*] (Taipei: 1951).

(*Zhongguo huijiao xiehui huibao*) as well asthe Arabic title *Lisan al-haqq* ("the language of truth"). While possessing a natural ring in Arabic, this Arabic title also implied the newspaper's opposition to any claims the PRC or the Soviet Union might make about Islam and Muslims. Indeed, this was precisely the content the newspaper emphasized. Issue after issue reported on topics such as the "communist bandits' criminal oppression of Muslims" (*gongfei pohai huijiao zuixing*) and Chinese Muslims' brave resistance.[746] The paper also reported on current events in a variety of Muslim countries, but tended to reserve positive portrayals only for those that gravitated toward the United States, opposed the Soviet Union and PRC, and maintained relations with Taiwan, such as Malaya/Malaysia, Turkey, Iraq (before 1958), and Jordan (King Hussein's visit to Taiwan in 1959 was an especially significant episode).[747]

As indicated above, Bai Chongxi believed that sending Chinese Muslim diplomatic delegations abroad was the wartime practice most worth replicating in the battle against communism. While the "Near and Middle East Delegation" Bai had begun planning from Hengyang in fall 1949 did not come to fruition, he and the other Chinese Muslim elites on Taiwan began working almost immediately to revive the idea. In April 1950, fifty-five individuals led by a (Uyghur?) member of the Legislative Yuan and Chinese Islamic Federation named Abdullah (Ch. *Abudula*) petitioned the Executive Yuan regarding the possibility of organizing a Near East Delegation, "to increase our strength in foreign relations and garner support for a counter-offensive against the Mainland."[748] Abdullah and his associates asked if the

[746] "Gongfei pohai huijiao zuixing [Communist Bandits' Criminal Oppression of Muslims]," *Zhongguo huijiao xiehui huibao*/*Lisan al-Haqq*, 61, 15 October 1958, p. 1.

[747] On King Hussein's visit: "Wei wo zongtong guibin: Yudan guowang Husheng fanghua: jiang jiejian benhui daibiao canguan Taibei qingzhensi [Our President's Distinguished Guest: Jordan's King Hussein Visits China: Will Inspect Taipei Mosque with Our Federation's Representative]," *Zhongguo huijiao xiehui huibao*/*Lisan al-Haqq*, 65, 25 February 1959, p. 1.

[748] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives 11-WAA-00004.

Executive Yuan would raise the issue for discussion at their session on 14 April. He then elaborated on the reasoning behind the request:

> We all know that U.S. Secretary of State Acheson's "comprehensive [containment] policy" means that the "United States must bring its full power to bear in containing the Soviet Union…and that the U.S. government and its allies must maintain a high degree of unity." Given the importance that the mighty United States places on achieving international unity, we wish to draw attention to the countries of the Near East, such as Indonesia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, etc., all of which are now caught in a rather precarious position. This is the first reason why we wish to form, as soon as possible, a goodwill delegation to visit all the Muslim countries of the Near East.
>
> The Soviet Union, a UN Security Council member state, has along with its satellites moved forcefully to cancel our Chinese delegate Jiang's status. Many member states detested it when they treated Egypt with similar disrespect. We wish to remind you that we [Chinese Muslims] are still fifty million strong. When we cannot make a difference by supporting vetoes [in the UN Security Council], we must find new ways of thinking about our foreign relations. This is the second reason why we wish to form a Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation.
>
> Last year, our government sent a delegation to twenty-two Catholic countries in South [and Central] America. Diversifying our friendships in foreign relations is a sound policy, and the more sympathy we earn from the peoples of free democratic nations, the better. This is a good precedent. This is the third reason why we wish to form a Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation.
>
> Such an effort will be valuable for protecting Taiwan, facilitate the early stages of retaking the Mainland, and increase our strength in foreign relations.[749]

Perhaps Abdullah and the Chinese Islamic Association knew that this message was well-timed. On April 22, the Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs received a telegram from the UN Sinodelegate in New York reporting considerable hostility from the Soviets. When the Taiwanese representative (at that time occupying the "China" seat on the Security Council) accused the Soviets of sending military aid to the Chinese Communists, the Soviets called the Taiwanese representative's words "slanderous" and referred to him as a "private individual

[749] Sinica Modern History Archives 11-WAA-00004. It is unclear to which statement of U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson Abdullah's petition might refer. If it is the 1949 policy paper *United States Relations with China with Special Reference to the Period 1944–1949* (a.k.a. the "China White Paper"), I have not yet found the exact passage.

illegally claiming [the] status of representative."[750] Given the difficulties with the Soviets at the UN, the GMD government in Taiwan was eager for alternative avenues for pursuing their anti-Communist foreign policy. The Chinese Islamic Federation in Taiwan appears to have anticipated that this would be a good time to propose a new Near East delegation—or perhaps it was a lucky coincidence. The delegation got as far as submitting passport applications for the proposed members, but these appear to have been left incomplete. Again the plan was delayed.[751]

The problem was this: Wang Zengshan—the proposed delegation leader—was absent when the plans were being discussed. At first Wang was in still in Xinjiang, where he had been working for the GMD as head of the Xinjiang Provincial Government's Civil Affairs Bureau (*Xinjiang sheng minzheng ting*) at Dihua (i.e. Urumqi). According to Wang's journal, he was busy in this post, overseeing the Xinjiang Hui Cultural Progress Association's construction of mosques, coordinating an educational survey with the Association, and liaising with U.S. Consul to Xinjiang John Hall Paxton, whom Wang offered some advice regarding the Turkish/Turki language and script. From early to mid-1949, Wang anxiously followed the progress of the PLA westward to Xi'an and Gansu. On 21 May, he wrote "Secretary Liu says Nationalist troops stationed in Xinjiang number only 100,000. The central government is in grave danger." The last entry in his journal was from 24 July 1949.[752] Wang evaded CCP forces sometime in the fall of

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[750] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives 11-WAA-00004, file 2, p. 16.

[751] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives 11-WAA-00004, file 1 pp. 48-50 and file 2 pp. 1-15.

[752] Wang Zengshan, *Xin zheng jiyao* [*Meeting Notes of the Xinjiang Government*] (Dihua i.e. Urumqi: n.p., 1946-49), in Wang Zengshan Papers, National University of Singapore Central Library.

Regarding construction of mosques: "9 May 1949: The Xinjiang Huizu Cultural Progress Association representatives met regarding prayer hall decoration. Still satisfied, but all present felt it lacked enough religious character. Therefore, among the texts they chose [to decorate the mosque] were the Quranic verses 'Cling fast, ye one and all, and do not let go the great cord of God'" and 'Verily all the believers are brothers.'"

Regarding education: "11 May 1949: According to the statistics of the [Xinjiang] Huizu Cultural Progress Association, the Hui of Xinjiang total 200,000. With regard to their educational attainment, 21 have studied abroad, 15 have attended university, 384 have attended [some?] senior high school, 1,288 have attended [some?] junior high

1949, fleeing over the Karakoram Mountains with his family and fifteen "dependents" via Kashmir and Lahore, and finally settling in Karachi. In the following weeks, he was able to contact the GMD government, itself in the middle of evacuating to Taiwan, to inform them of his circumstances. Wang was the one Bai Chongxi was referring to when he alluded in his *Work Plan* to Chinese Muslim contacts in Pakistan who had escaped from Xinjiang.[753]

On 9 January 1950, the reassembled GMD Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Taiwan wrote to the Executive Yuan Secretariat to remind them that they and the Chinese Islamic Association had discussed organizing a Near East Delegation the previous September and had selected Wang Zengshan to lead it, but that this remained in the planning stages because Wang was forced to flee to Pakistan. In the same communication, the MFA passed along a request from Wang for material assistance for himself and his dependents, the purpose of which was to help him return to Taiwan to take part in anti-communist efforts from there before re-embarking with the delegation. By 21 February, the Ministry of Finance replied to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs approving NT10,000 to be sent to Wang via the Chinese Central Bank branch in Karachi.[754]

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school, 9,623 have attended [some?] primary school, and the illiterate number 182,134. Reading such figures, one cannot help but feel ashamed and distressed."

Regarding Paxton: Wang states that on 17 May 1949, U.S. Consul to Xinjiang John Hall Paxton invited his family over for dinner and a movie. They discussed the U.S. media as well as the Turkish/Turki script and language, with Wang offering Paxton some clarifications. Wang lamented that 'My country's intelligence and power does not match that of the foreigners!" but at the same time commented, 'How can the American diplomats expect to spread their propaganda in Xinjiang, with all its various peoples, without knowing Turki?'"

Paxton's perspective can be assessed using the John Hall Paxton Papers (MS629), Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University, esp. Boxes 3-9.

[753] Described in Wang's letter to Minister of Foreign Affairs Ye. Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 020-021904-0008, p. 10. This file was declassified by the Taiwanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in March 2015.

It is unclear whether Wang fled in the same group as Isa Yusuf Alptekin, though they did know each other and did leave at approximately the same time, by the same route. Rosey Ma, "Hj. Jelaluddin Wang Zengshan, 1903-1961," Wang Zengshan Papers, National University of Singapore Central Library.

Rosey Ma's biographical introduction to the Wang Zengshan Papers states that the family left in September, whereas Wang's letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs says that it was November.

[754] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives 020-021904-0008.

Wang did not "return" to Taiwan after all, because an opportunity soon arose to capitalize on his accidental residence in Karachi by attending the inaugural meeting of the World Muslim Congress (Motamar-e Alam-e Islami, later spelled in a slightly more Arabized form, Motamar al-Alam al-Islami) as a representative of Taiwan's Chinese Islamic Federation. It appears Wang had been directly or indirectly in touch sometime in 1950 with Haleem Sahib, a professor and president of the Motamar. The Motamar had been working since India's partition and the formation of Pakistan in August 1947 to revive the earlier Islamic world congresses of Mecca (1926) and Jerusalem (1931). It held its inaugural meeting at its headquarters in Karachi in February 1949, featuring a speech by Liaquat Ali Khan, Pakistan's first prime minister. It selected the former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Hajj Amin al-Husayni (whom Wang Zengshan had met in Beirut in 1938 during the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation; see Chapter Four) as its chair and Dr. Inamullah Khan as its secretary-general, and formed a committee to draft a constitution. Conference attendees included representatives from Turkey, Pakistan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Syria, North Africa, and Junagadh. The conference dealt with two topical areas, "The Women of Islam" and "The Youth of Islam."[755] The Motamar probably considered such topics to be "social" rather than political, and a continuation of the Islamic modernist social mobilization models of the interwar period. By the early 1950s, however, the emerging Cold War was pressuring ostensibly cultural organizations such as the Motamar to "choose sides." Whether it said so or not, the Motamar's membership consisted of anti-communist Muslims. At the same time, such organizations attempted to carve out various forms of middle ground. For example, the Motamar became a proponent of the argument that Islamic economic thought represented a

[755] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives 11-WAA-00004, file 2, pp. 33-34; http://www.motamaralalamalislami.org/history.html.

"third way" between capitalism and communism, an argument that we have seen the Chinese Muslims in Taiwan were already making.[756]

The issue of the world's Muslim minorities also grew in importance in the context of this early Cold-War Islamic internationalism. Pakistan had been partitioned from India, and most of the world's Muslim-majority countries (prior to the revolutions of the 1950s and 1960s) remained in an Anglo-American sphere. At the same time, however, the Motamar was concerned that huge numbers of Muslims remained under communist rule in the Soviet Union and China. There is a high likelihood that Wang Zengshan played a direct role in raising the Motamar's awareness of this issue. In his report on the February 1951 inaugural meeting of the Motamar submitted to the GMD Executive Yuan and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Wang included a map he had created at the Motamar showing the "World Distribution of Islam" (see IMAGE 1) that raised the issue of Muslim minorities quite clearly. In addition to the majority-Muslim Soviet satellites of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, this map shaded portions of Russian- and PRC-controlled territory (including Xinjiang and parts of Gansu, Qinghai, Ningxia, etc.) as contiguous with the rest of the "Islamic world." It also marked with dots those "places where Muslims and non-Muslims live amongst one another," particularly Northwest China, North China, Yunnan, and parts of India.[757] Six months later, Wang's map would be reproduced and published with Bai Chongxi's abovementioned *Work Plan*; Bai's call for attention to Palestine, Kashmir, Hyderabad, and other contested territories was based on

[756] See for example *Some Economic Aspects of Islam* (Karachi: Umma Publishing House, for the Motamar, 1964); *Some Economic Resources of Muslim Countries* (Karachi: Umma Publishing House, for the Motamar, 1964).

[757] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives 11-WAA-00004, p. 32.

Wang's report.[758] The Motamar itself also continued to be preoccupied with the issue of Muslim minorities for years to come.[759]

IMAGE 1. Wang Zengshan's "Distribution of World Islam" map from the inaugural Motamar al-Alam al-Islami, February 1951. The region of Northwest China (Gansu, Ningxia, and Qinghai) is unique on Wang's map for being both shaded as contiguous with the rest of the Islamic world, and dotted as being a place where Muslims and non-Muslims live among one another. Source: Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives.

Crucially, how important was the Motamar's role in encouraging Pakistan to join the Baghdad Pact in February 1955, which (despite its recognition of the PRC in 1950) signaled Pakistan's shift into a U.S. sphere of influence?[760] And if that role was strong, how important in turn was Wang Zengshan in pushing the Motamar in an anticommunist direction? It is possible that all these things were connected. For one thing, the Motamar's president, Hajj Amin al-Husayni, clearly brought an anti-communist dimension to the organization. When Wang

[758] Bai, *Zhongguo huijiao xiehui jiyao*, map following p. 35.

[759] See for example *Country by Country Outline Survey of Muslim Minorities of the World* (Karachi: The Congress [i.e. Motamar al-alam al-Islami], 1977).

[760] Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery: The United States, India, and Pakistan* (Columbia UP, 1997), Ch. 4. Robert McMahon makes it sound like Pakistan's joining Baghdad Pact resulted directly from Prime Minister Liaqat Ali's increasingly close relationship with the United States, but this leaves open the question of what pressures in that direction may have emanated instead from Pakistan itself, including the Motamar.

Zengshan met with al-Husayni in Beirut in 1938, their conversation had in fact turned toward the topic of communism, at which point al-Husayni remarked (according to Xue Wenbo's records) that communism was inappropriate for Muslims and that it "tends toward the dictatorship of the proletariat" (*wuchan jieji zhuanzheng*).[761] Furthermore, a key intermediate step in Pakistan's joining the Baghdad Pact was a bilateral cooperation agreement it had signed with Turkey one year earlier. The fact that Wang Zengshan was also highly involved with Islamic circles in Turkey on an ongoing basis provokes this question further.

After the Motamar, however, it appears nothing happened on the Taiwanese side for two months. Bai Chongxi wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 7 May to remind them that Wang had attended the conference.[762] He received a reply from Chiang Kai-shek himself on 23 May.[763] Chiang's message quoted Vice President and Executive Yuan Director Chen Cheng's earlier response, making two suggestions: appointing Wang to stay in Pakistan as Free China's permanent representative to the Motamar, and, equally interesting, proposing that the Motamar organize a branch in Taiwan.[764]

Wang remained for a time in Karachi after the Motamar, still not moving to Taiwan. During this time, he did his best to gather intelligence on PRC and Soviet activities in Pakistan, and throughout South and Central Asia and the Middle East, particularly as emanating (or

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[761] *ZGHJJDFWTRJ*, p. 290.

[762] Sinica Modern History Archives 11-WAA-00004, file 2, pp. 22-23.

[763] Sinica Modern History Archives 11-WAA-00004, file 2, pp. 36-37.

[764] This was doubly interesting because one of the Motamar's eight branch offices is now located in Beijing, part of the Beijing Chinese Islamic Association.

perceived to be emanating) from Xinjiang.[765] He remained in regular contact with Bai Chongxi and GMD Minister of Foreign Affairs Ye Gongchao (a.k.a. George Yeh), arguing that more robust contact with the Islamic world could be a sturdy pillar of Taiwan's anti-communist policy, if only the GMD government would seize the opportunity. On one occasion, Wang went so far as to mail Ye annotated newspaper clippings from Rangoon's *Chung Hwa Shang Pao* (*The China Commercial Times*) to reinforce his point. One clipping was from 8 March 1951, and discussed the narrowing of Taiwan's options in the international arena. Wang underlined a passage he felt particularly deserved Ye's attention:

> England, France, and other countries are unwilling to stand with Taiwan, which makes Taiwan's relations with neutral countries such as India and the Arab nations all the more important…With regard to foreign relations, the strengthening of Sino-Soviet relations and of both countries' growing connections with the countries of the Near East [is another reason to strengthen Taiwan's relations with such countries].[766]

The other clipping, from 14 April 1951, summarized statements by U.S. First Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (and former Texas oil man) George McGhee, which confidently asserted that communism could not succeed in Iran or the Middle East. Wang underlined the following sentences for Ye: "The reasons the Soviet Union will fail are as follows: (1) the majority of peoples in the Middle East and Southeast Asia detest communism (2) these people subscribe to religion and individualism (3) they also possess

[765] Sinica Modern History Archives 020-021904-0008, p. 21; Bai Chongxi to Wang Zengshan, 15 November 1952, Wang Zengshan Papers, National University of Singapore Central Library. In this particular communication, Bai wrote to Wang to pass along intelligence from the U.S. embassy in Karachi regarding the "false Soviets'" activities in Xinjiang, and referenced the need to strengthen friendly relations between the "alliance of democracies" and Muslim countries.

[766] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives 020-021904-0008.

ancient cultures which they are determined to preserve."[767] It is highly unlikely that McGhee, over a year before the Egyptian revolution and two years before the CIA-MI6 coup to remove Iran's democratically elected Mohamed Mossadegh, would have appreciated that U.S. policy itself would ultimately drive "these people" into the Soviets' arms.[768] In any case, according to Wang, the Americans were clearly receptive to the type of rhetoric and policy initiatives he, Bai, and others were envisioning. Wang's handwritten note accompanying the clipping read:

> The suggestion to strengthen our relations with the Muslim nations of the Near East, which I, Zengshan, previously had the honor of presenting, has not yet been taken into consideration. This is cause for disappointment. Enclosed herein are two newspaper clippings, which I unexpectedly find to be in agreement with my own humble opinion…I yet hold out hope of holding the line in firm opposition to international Communism.[769]

Such statements served two purposes. One—similar to the anti-Japanese rhetoric of the previous decade—was to perform anti-communism early and often, so as to reassure the GMD of the Chinese Muslims' unflagging commitment to the cause of nation, state, and party. The other was to persuade that government of the practical value of continuing to pursue Islamic internationalism in the struggle against communism, for the social and political position of elite Chinese Muslims in Taiwan was perceived as being, and probably was in fact, directly proportional to cultivating such a sense of "relevance." The odd combination of deference and frank consternation with which Wang addresses Ye suggests that at this point, the GMD government was still willing to listen to the Muslim leaders, at least with respect to the all-important work of anti-communism. Wang's thinly veiled suggestion that the government was

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[767] "Mei Zhongdong sizhang fanhua fu tan zhongdong jushi: ren gongchan zhuyi bu hui zai zhongdong huosheng [U.S. Deputy Secretary for Middle East Affairs: Communism Will Not Prevail in the Middle East]," *Zhonghua shangbao*/*The China Commercial Press* 14 April 1951.

[768] Khalidi, *Sowing Crisis*; Abrahamian, *The Coup*.

[769] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives 020-021904-0008.

not doing enough to seize anti-communist opportunities in the Islamic world, however, also speaks to multiple anxieties on the part of Wang and his associates. One was that the GMD state would increasingly overlook them in Taiwanese society; the other was that the state would cease supporting their aspirations to be better connected with the Islamic world. In other words, anti-communism had become the key to preserving the twin pillars of elite Chinese Muslim identity that had developed over the last forty years: transnationalism and integrationism.

A new opportunity struck for Wang later that month. On 26 April 1951, Wang (who was still receiving his mail at the "ABC Chinese Restaurant" on Elphinstone Street in Saddar, Karachi) wrote again to Minister Ye announcing that Professor Zeki Velidi Togan of Istanbul University, with whom Wang had studied in the 1920s, had invited him to attend the Twenty-Second International Congress of Orientalists in Istanbul in September 1951. Togan was serving as president of the Congress's organizing committee. Ye Gongchao and Bai Chongxi made arrangements to fund Wang's travel to the Congress. The Congress itself, held from 15 to 22 September, was attended by over three hundred individuals from Turkey, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, the United States, Egypt, and Pakistan; Wang Zengshan was probably counted among the fourteen attendees from Pakistan. The Congress featured a "Committee of Honour" including Louis Massignon, H.A.R. Gibb, Arnold Toynbee, William F. Albright, Carl Brockelmann, Enno Littmann, Giorgio Levi Della Vida, and Taha Hussein. Substantively, in addition to ancient studies, philology, art history, and so on, the Congress would contain portions on both Islamic and East Asian studies, which apparently prompted Togan's conclusion that Wang would be interested. (Despite all this, it is not entirely clear whether Wang attended.)[770]

[770] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 020-021904-0008; Zeki Velidi Togan, ed., *Proceedings of the Twenty-Second Congress of Orientalists, held in Istanbul, September 15th to 22nd, 1951* (Constantinople: International Congress of Orientalists, 1951); Zeki Velidi Togan, "First Circular: XXIInd International Congress of Orientalists" (Istanbul: 21 November 1950), in Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern

By early 1953, Wang was still in Karachi, and still signing his letters as "Delegate to the Motamar al-Alam al-Islami from China," but using an address at the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations. On 2 February, he wrote to Professor Haleem Sahib, president of the Motamar al-Alam al-Islami, recommending that Sahib invite Bai Chongxi to the Third Open Session of the Motamar, to be held in Cairo later that year. Sahib replied on 20 February, noting that Bai and Wang would both be invited, and that the invitations would be issued from Cairo on behalf of Muhammad al-Khidr Hussein, the Chinese Muslims' old instructor, who had now risen to the position of Sheikh al-Azhar. While the details of this latest conference are more obscure, it appears Wang at least did attend with Bai's approval.[771]

In the next two years, however, events would accelerate far beyond Bai and Wang's control. In October 1954, Gamal Abdel Nasser, following an assassination attempt by a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, proceeded to imprison the Brotherhood's leadership, fundamentally altering the status of Islam in Egypt. In April 1955, Nasser attended the first Afro-Asian Conference at Bandung, Indonesia, where he and Zhou Enlai got along famously well. In September, long frustrated in his overtures to the United States, Nasser concluded the "Czech arms deal," which edged Egypt significantly closer to the Soviet bloc.[772] As was the case for the GMD government generally, Bandung in particular exploded the Taiwanese Chinese Muslims'

History Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 020-021904-0008; R.N. Dandekar, "The Twenty-Second International Congress of Orientalists, Istanbul, 15th-22nd September, 1951, *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* 32/1-4 (1951), pp. i-xxiv. Puzzlingly, the detailed records of the conference proceedings compiled by Togan do not list Wang as one of the attendees after all, even though Bai Chongxi had approved his travel funding. The conference did include two unrelated representatives from "China (Formosa)" as well as several delegates from Pakistan, but Wang's name does not appear in either set.

[771] "Haji Jelaluddin Wang Zin-Shan to Prof. A.B.A. Haleem Sahib," 2 February 1953, in Wang Zengshan Papers; A.B.A. Haleem [Sahib] to Haji Jelaluddin Wang Zin-Shan Saheb," 20 February 1953, in Wang Zengshan Papers; "Pai Chunghsi [i.e. Bai Chongxi] telegram to Haji Jelaluddin Wang," 9 March 1953.

[772] Mitchell, *Society of the Muslim Brothers*; Haykal, *Cairo Documents*.

hopes for preventing stronger relations between the PRC and major Muslim countries.[773] The anti-communist Islamic internationalism conducted by the Chinese Muslim elites on Taiwan never fully recovered from the Bandung moment.

In the decade from the end of the war to Bandung, as this drama unfolded between Bai, Wang, the GMD, and various Muslim countries, Wang's old friend Ma Tianying was following a very different path, but one that ultimately led in a similar direction. Ma returned to Egypt from 1943 to 1946 as secretary of the Chinese consulate.[774] During this post, in June 1946, he became a member of the "National Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Egypt," at the grade of "apprentice" (*apprenti*/*mubtadi'*); in mid-1947, he was promoted to "companion" (*compagnon*/*shaghal*).[775] Ma left Egypt in October 1946 and returned to Beiping, sending the GMD government a detailed report on King Farouq I.[776] By early 1948, the GMD had decided it could put Ma to better use in Southeast Asia, at which point he was involved in lengthy discussions with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the GMD consulate in Singapore regarding suspicions about Malayan communists.[777] Then, in late 1948, Ma was appointed consul-general in Ipoh, Perak, where he remained until the victory of the CCP. On 30 December 1949, while Wang Zengshan was crossing into Pakistan, Ma received orders from Minister of Foreign Affairs Ye Gongchao to "return home" (*huiguo ling*)—that is, to move to Taiwan. Ma apparently did not respond for two and a half weeks, prompting Minister Ye to write again on 16 January 1950

[773] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-INO-09133.

[774] "Biographie: Ibrahim Tien Ying Ma," Ma Tianying Papers, MTY.C12 C500002.

[775] Ma Tianying Papers, MTY.B3.3 B19460603.

[776] Ma Tianying Papers, MTY.B3.3 B19470001.1.

[777] Ma Tianying Papers, MTY.B3.9, MTY B3.10, MTY.B3.11, MTY.B3.13, MTY.B3.14, MTY.B3.15.

repeating the orders.[778] The next extant communication is from 20 February, when Ye asked Ma to "return the seal of the [defunct] Ipoh Consulate to our consul-general in Singapore."[779] Ma had disobeyed orders and was choosing to stay, along with his family, in Malaya.

Ma's life veered sharply from there—though perhaps it did not feel that way to him. While remaining in touch and on good terms with the GMD government, he was not as involved as Wang Zengshan in the formulation of the Taiwanese Chinese Muslims' anti-communist policies. Rather, he devoted himself to scholarship as well as to all manner of political, social, and religious activism in Malaya. He maintained regular correspondence with dozens of public figures, many of whom he had met during the South Seas Delegation, including Tungku Abdul Rahman (the first prime minister of the Federation of Malaya, 1957-63, and of Malaysia, 1963-70) and the Alsagoffs of Singapore. One of his primary activities was proselytizing to non-Muslim Chinese in the Malaysian Peninsula on behalf of the All-Malaya Muslim Missionary Society, successfully winning numerous converts. At the invitation of Tungku Abdul Rahman, in 1960 Ma joined the Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia (PERKIM, i.e. "Muslim Welfare Organization of Malaysia"), through which he claimed to have helped convert approximately 1,600 people to Islam.[780] In the meantime, he had applied for Malayan citizenship and was granted it—by the name of "Haji Ibrahim Tien-Ying Ma"—on 27 November 1957, three months after the Federation's independence on 31 August.[781]

[778] Ma Tianying Papers, MTY.B3.25 B19491230; Ma Tianying Papers, MTY.B3.26 B19500116.1-2.

[779] Ma Tianying Papers, MTY.B3.27, B19500220

[780] A biography of Ma in Ma Tianying Papers, MTY.C12 C500020 cites the 1,600 figure. Ma's voluminous correspondences as a member of PERKIM can be found in the folders under MTY.B5.

[781] Ma Tianying Papers, MTY.C12 C500019.1, MTY.C12 C500019.2.

The last gasp of Bai, Wang, and Ma's version of postwar Islamic internationalism took shape in the project to "renovate and expand"—essentially build from scratch—the Taipei Grand Mosque (*Taibei qingzhensi*). The Taiwanese Chinese Islamic Federation hoped that the mosque would symbolize their community's connectedness to the Islamic world, and they and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs both hoped that the opening ceremony would be an occasion to reinforce Taiwan's friendship with anti-communist Muslim countries as mediated by the Federation. The Federation formed a "Renovation and Expansion Committee" consisting of Shi Zizhou, Sun Shengwu, Chang Zixuan, and two others. The well-known Taiwanese architect Yang Cho-cheng (a non-Muslim) was eventually selected to design the structure. Bai Chongxi also invited Minister of Foreign Affairs Ye to be a committee member.

The committee submitted its "Taipei mosque proposal" to the GMD Executive Yuan in December 1957. In their proposal, they cited the need to "conform to international standards and attract the friendship of Middle Eastern countries." They asked for NT4 million, and specified that the mosque would need to be built "in a new place." The same month, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote to Ma Hongkui and Ma Bufang, asking for donations. The cost estimate was later raised to NT6 million; the committee wrote to the Bank of Taiwan for a loan for 3 million, but were only approved for a fixed-term loan of 2 million. They reapplied five months later, upon which they received the remaining 1 million.[782]

The committee's next step was to request information gathering on principles and examples of mosque architecture Middle Eastern countries in which Taiwan still had embassies

[782] Chinese Islamic Federation to Executive Yuan, 17 December 1957; Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ma Hongkui, 27 December 1957; Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ma Bufang, 27 December 1957; Ministry of Finance to Bank of Taiwan and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 7 April 1958; Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00275.

or consulates, which were all U.S. allies (for the time being). They eventually received replies from Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Iran.[783] Even more tellingly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote to the U.S. Information Service to inquire about mosques the United States, and received a reply recommending they study the Islam Temple and Mohammed Temple of Islam in Washington, DC; the Islamic Mission of America on State Street in Brooklyn; and the Holy Temple of Islam on Greenwood Avenue in Chicago.[784] They also asked the diplomatic installations to begin preparing lists of potential invitees to the mosque's opening ceremony. As the planning developed, the Executive Yuan Director Xu Baiyuan recommended to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that foreign Muslims wishing to donate to the mosque should be given a "favorable rate of exchange."[785]

Compared to the 1930s and 1940s, Chiang Kai-shek's lack of involvement in a major initiative such as the construction of Taipei's first large mosque signaled a diminished status for the Chinese Muslims in Taiwan. During the war, he had approved line budgets for Da Pusheng's Pingliang school and traveled to Gansu personally with the "Northwest Propaganda Corps." Even in the early 1950s, he was involved in Wang Zengshan's attendance at the Motamar al-Alam al-Islami in Karachi. By the end of 1958, however, executive-level coordination on the Taipei Mosque project had clearly been delegated to Vice President Chen Cheng, indicating that this was seen primarily as a domestic social and public relations issue rather than a matter of

[783] Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00275. Among the materials they collected was the 1952 book *Türk Mimari Anitlari*.

[784] Ministry of Foreign Affairs to U.S. Information Service, 21 January 1958, in Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00275. These three mosques still exist, with slightly different names; the first two remain at or near their original locations.

[785] Executive Yuan to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 17 January 1958, in Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00275.

strategic importance to the ROC's foreign affairs, as the Islamic Federation would have liked everyone to believe.[786]

The Taipei Mosque project committed a significant gaffe abroad. On 23 December 1958, the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote in a friendly but stern manner to the ROC embassy in Jidda informing them that Chinese individuals residing in Saudi had collected contributions of money in Medina to support the Taipei Mosque, a practice forbidden by Saudi law, "hoping that such collecting may be stopped and not repeated again." The ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs relayed the message to the mosque committee.[787] Beyond respecting Saudi law, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would probably have been especially eager not to offend Saudi Arabia in the latter's capacity as an important anti-communist power and U.S. ally.

Soon thereafter, the project ran into a telling obstacle at home as well. On 18 July 1959, the mosque committee wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressing concern that the mosque would be adjacent to buildings that violated architectural regulations, and asked "how they might be dismantled legally."[788] A ministry official responded immediately—anonymously and specifying "please do not transmit or include this in any official communications"—to say that "While we agree with you in principle, the completion date of the mosque is fixed to coincide with the visit of Muslim leaders, so discussion of costs and protocols in fact only causes

[786] Chen Cheng to Executive Yuan, 17 October 1958; Chen Cheng to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 22 December 1958, in Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00275.

[787] Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Embassy of the Republic of China, Jidda, 23 December 1958; Republic of China Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Taipei Mosque Renovation and Expansion Committee, 8 January 1959, in Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00275.

[788] Taipei Mosque Renovation and Expansion Committee to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18 July 1959, Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00275.

needless worry. It would be best if you were to resolve this matter with the private individuals involved; it is not necessary for the government to intervene." The ministry repeated itself several times in the following months, with the GMD Central Committee and the Taipei Municipal Architectural Bureau eventually intervening to resolve the issue.[789] For its part, however, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was willing to look past building laws, safety, and to an extent cost in order to provide a timely and impressive demonstration to the anti-communist and U.S.-allied foreign Muslim leaders, even over the objections of their own Muslim citizens. As a late-1959 meeting between the mosque committee, the GMD Central Committee, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated, the purpose of the mosque was "to promote international Islamic friendship in support of the aims of the foreign relations of the Republic of China" and "to welcome foreign dignitaries…to observe the conditions of progress in our Free China."[790]

Who were the foreign Muslim dignitaries that justified such shortcuts? In fact, despite great effort, the Taiwanese Chinese Muslims and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs struggled tremendously to retain high-level invitees. In the end, they were unable to secure any visitors from the Middle East. Even at that, the Islamic Federation hoped for three attendees in particular: the Sultan of Brunei Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin, Motamar al-Alam al-Islami Secretary Inamullah Khan, and Malayan Prime Minister Tungku Abdul Rahman.[791] They knew whom to consult on

[789] Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Taipei Mosque Renovation and Expansion Committee, 19 July 1959; Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Taipei Mosque Renovation and Expansion Committee, 19 August 1959; Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Taipei Mosque Renovation and Expansion Committee, 19 July 1959; Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Taipei Mosque Renovation and Expansion Committee, 4 September 1959; Taibei shi gongwu ju to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 24 October 1959, in Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00275.

[790] "Notice from the Fifth Session of the GMD Central Committee," 22 December 1959, in Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00275.

[791] In preparing invitations, the Chinese Muslims in Taiwan also consulted the Arab League's envoy to the Philiippines, Hussein al-Ahmadi al-Zawahiri (son of the former Sheikh al-Azhar during the first Chinese Azharite delegations).

the second and third: Wang Zengshan and Ma Tianying. Wang, however, appears not to have gotten involved; he had moved to Istanbul in the mid-1950s, accepting a professorship at his alma mater, Istanbul University, where he founded Turkey's first Chinese studies department. Wang passed away in 1961, so it is possible that deteriorating health was another factor keeping him from being as active as before in Taiwan's foreign affairs.[792] Ma Tianying, meanwhile, wrote back and forth several times with Shi Zizhou and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, mostly to convey requests on behalf of Tungku Abdul Rahman (the ceremony should be timed to fit his schedule, and he should be the guest of honor). Eventually it became clear that Tungku would not be able to attend, as he needed to be in London. Deputy Prime Minister Tungku Abdul Razak was proposed instead. In one of their last exchanges on the issue, Shi Zizhou telegrammed Ma Tianying saying "Please cable confirmation whether Sultan of Brunei and Tun Abdul Razak will visit Taipei." Two weeks later, Shi updated: "Second Malayan Ruler condolences…Sultan Brunei sending two representatives…Hoping you will come." In the end, Abdul Razak and even Ma Tianying himself did not fly over from Malaya. Ma was perhaps too absorbed in his many local commitments. Both Ma and Abdul Razak recommended that their wives attend instead. Ma said his wife would "return to the home country" (*huiguo*) in order to attend—perhaps an odd choice of words by this point.[793]

Making Islam Communist: Chinese Muslims in China Fight for Survival

Where was Da Pusheng?

[792] Rosey Ma, "Hj. Jelaluddin Wang Zengshan," Wang Zengshan Papers.

[793] Ma Tianying to Shi Zizhou, 16 March 1960, in Academia Sinica (Taipei), Modern History Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Collection 11-WAA-00275.

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Da had been perhaps the staunchest Chinese Muslim supporter of GMD nationalism and its vision for China's Muslims. From 1943 until 1945, after the transformation of the Pingliang school to state-run status, Da moved to Zhangjiachuan, Gansu—where Zuo Zongtang had forcibly relocated large numbers of "rebellious" Muslims from Shaanxi in the 1870s—in order to continue his anti-Japanese work on behalf of the GMD. He also completed his *Six Treatises on Islam* at this time (see Chapter Two). When the war ended, Da returned to the coast, dividing his time between Nanjing and Shanghai. Official accounts claim that he "welcomed liberation" in Shanghai in 1949.[794] Though already seventy-five years old, his extensive subsequent travels suggest that old age was not the cause of Da's decision to stay in China. In fact, Da enjoyed a remarkable second career that was ideologically opposite but functionally almost identical to what had come before. In 1952, he traveled to Helsinki and Vienna as a representative of the PRC, including at the Vienna People's World Peace Conference. The same year, he also embarked on the PRC's first Hajj delegation, but was mysteriously stopped in Pakistan.[795] In 1953, he was appointed deputy director of the newly formed Chinese Islamic Association, which he helped found with Uyghur leader Burhan Shahidi. Beginning in 1954, he served as a Jiangsu Province representative to the First, Second, and Third National People's Congresses. In 1955, he attended the Bandung Conference with Zhou Enlai.

[794] Da Jie, "Da Pusheng ahong zhuanlue."

[795] This was very likely the doing of Wang Zengshan. Although no documentary evidence is extent in the Wang Zengshan Papers regarding this particular episode, he was tracking these matters closely from Karachi. In July of the following year, Wang cabled Ye Gongchao and Bai Chongxi about a similar incident (in which the tables were turned this time) regarding forty "Xinjiang refugees" in Pakistan being refused Hajj visas by the Saudi government, and to "Please wire Saudi Arabian Government issue visa. Last ship sailing [in four days]." The Ministry of Foreign Affairs replied the next day that the Chinees Embassy in Egypt had been instructed to assist with the visas. This time, Wang failed, and the forty Uyghurs were detained by the Saudi consul in Karachi. Unfortunately, the trail of documents for this episode ends there. Haji Jelaluddin Wangzinshan to HE Dr. George Yeh, General Omar Paichunghsi, General Yolbas Beg, Taipeh, Formosa, 24 July 1953; Waichiaopu to Haji Jelalludin Wangzindhan [sic] c/o MIDOCORP Karachi, 25 July 1953; Omar Paichunghsi to Haji Jelaluddin Wangzinshan, 27 July 1953; Wangzinshan to Chinese Embassy Cairo, 27 July 1953. Wang Zengshan Papers, NUS Central Library.

Apparently not appreciating the significance of Gamal Abdel Nasser recent imprisonment of the Muslim Brotherhood, Zhou was interested in using Da's presence to reassure Egypt and the many other Muslim leaders in attendance that the newly founded PRC would be friendly to both China's own Muslim population and to Muslim countries. For the remainder of the 1950s, Da led a new PRC Hajj delegation (successfully this time), led the Sino-Indonesian Friendship Delegation that met with President Sukarno, and also visited Egypt and Syria as a representative of the PRC. In 1957, he met Mao Zedong at a ceremony at Beijing's Tiananmen city gate.[796]

Da, who passed away in 1965 at age ninety-one and was buried in Beijing, was thus among the relatively few historical figures who interacted substantively with both Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Zedong, and served in high-level political roles in both the Republic and the PRC. Given the tremendous political stakes involved in both cases, to do so while also being Muslim and an imam was in some sense a remarkable achievement. Considerable speculation is required to fill in the gaps in this story. At the very least, it is safe to conclude that a version of the same narrative of Muslims' belonging in China served Da under communist rule as it had under nationalist rule, at least during the 1950s.

Beyond Bandung, the PRC in the 1950s was indeed interested in portraying itself as a country with a thriving set of Muslim communities that accepted the state's ethnicized discourse about them, and in using this self-image to cultivate relations with Muslim countries. The strategic calculus behind this was obvious, and essentially equal and opposite to that of the ROC. If the PRC could sway enough of the world's newly independent "small" countries to recognize it and to vote for it in the United Nations, it could eventually wrest the UN Security Council's "China" seat from the ROC (one could argue this was the true meaning of phrases such as "long

[796] Da Jie, "Da Pusheng ahong zhuanlue."

live the unity of the peoples of the world," emblazoned on the walls of the Forbidden City to the right of Mao's portrait). In the process, the PRC could also use its friendly relations with the "Afro-Asian peoples" to frustrate the designs of the Americans, the Taiwanese, and increasingly its own Soviet allies throughout the decolonizing world.

Since so many of the "small" countries were Muslim, supporting Islamic internationalism through the Chinese Muslims clearly served the PRC's purposes. Perceiving this, the Chinese Islamic Association published a number of trilingual (Chinese-Arabic-English) propaganda materials in the mid- to late-1950s demonstrating that Muslims were living peacefully and allowed to practice their religion. As in earlier times, and as was the case to an extent for the Chinese Muslims' former associates on Taiwan, such practices should be interpreted not as sheer opportunism or the mere implementation of a vision imposed from above, but primarily in the "performative" terms of Chinese Muslim elites making the necessary discursive adjustments to ensure their community's survival.

For example, in March 1956—a year after the Bandung Conference, and two months before Egypt's recognition of the PRC—the Chinese Islamic Association published a propaganda book, *The Religious Life of Chinese Moslems* (Ch. *Zhongguo musilin de zongjiao shenghuo*; Ar. *al-Haya al-diniyya li-muslimi al-Sin*). This book featured dozens of photographs of Chinese Muslims, now considered to include ten "ethnic minority nationalities" (*shaoshu minzu*): the "Hui," Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Tajiks, Tatars, Uzbeks, Dongxiang, Salar, and Bao'an. The Chinese Islamic Association's foreword to the book noted that "The spread of Islam in China dates back more than one thousand years" before describing the many ways in which the establishment of the PRC represented a "new stage" in the life of Chinese Muslims. The foreword by the Chinese Islamic Association specified that Chinese Muslims, like all Chinese

citizens, enjoyed freedom of belief under the new constitution, that the CCP government had assisted Muslims in "repairing and redecorating" many of China's mosques, and that economic life was seeing "daily improvement." The closing passage, however, was the most significant: "We hope that the free religious life reflected in these pictures will further inspire the patriotic enthusiasm of Chinese Moslems, increase non-Moslems' understanding of Moslems in our country, and promote mutual understanding between us and our Moslem brothers and non-Moslem friends throughout the world."[797] The following year, the Chinese Islamic Association published a similar book, *Chinese Muslims in Progress* (Ch. *Qianjin zhong de Zhongguo Musilin*; Ar. *Muslimu al-Sin fi-l-taqaddum*). This volume, however, dared to open its foreword (all three versions) with a *Bismillah* and with a reminder that "The Koran says, 'All Moslems are brothers.'" This foreword noted that, in addition to Chinese, Arabic, and English, the Chinese Islamic Association had also begun printing materials in Indonesian.[798]

In a similar manner to the publications of the Chinese Muslims in Taiwan, these propaganda materials were intended in part to showcase the clout of leading Chinese Muslims throughout the Islamic world. *Chinese Muslims in Progress*, for example, contained several photographs depicting Burhan Shahidi, in this case in his capacity as leader of the Chinese Hajj mission of 1956, meeting with Gamal Abdel Nasser, Egyptian Minister for Religious Affairs Sheikh Ahmad Hassan al-Baquri (who later visited China), Syrian President Shukry al-Kuwatly,

[797] Zhongguo yisilanjiao xiehui [Chinese Islamic Association], *Zhongguo musilin de zongjiao shenghuo*/*Hayat muslimi al-sin al-diniyya*/*The Religious Life of Chinese Moslems* (Beijing: Zhongguo yisilanjiao xiehui, 1956), p. ix. This quotation is from the English version; there were no linguistic discrepancies between the three versions warranting analysis—though that fact is significant in itself, in light of the inter-linguistic discrepancies seen, for example, in the wartime propaganda of the Chinese Islamic Near East Delegation of 1937-39. Under the PRC, it became more difficult to deviate from official discourse simply by virtue of using Arabic.

[798] As one would expect, these books appear to have been discontinued during the 1960s and 1970s, but they reappeared in the 1980s.

Prince ʻAbdullah Hussein of Yemen, King Mohammed Zahir Shah of Afghanistan, and various Islamic leaders in Jordan (who were also being courted by the ROC and the Chinese Muslims in Taiwan, and whose country was ostensibly in the U.S. sphere of influence).[799] By the same token, the book also shows foreign Muslim leaders such as Sukarno visiting China and meeting with Chinese Muslims and Uyghurs. Of course, the photographs depict carefully staged, formal scenarios and do not indicate anything about the nature or extent of the interactions that occurred. They were meant to show that Muslims in the PRC could maintain their culture, that China (largely via its Muslim leaders) was influential and respected in the Islamic world, and that foreign Muslim leaders approved of China and its treatment of Muslims.

At the same time, these publications did something else that the Chinese Muslims in Taiwan clearly did not feel as compelled to do, which was to go to lengths to portray Muslims as living happy, health, productive lives in the "New China." To this end, they included multiple photos of Muslims meeting with and clapping for Mao Zedong, performing Hajj, celebrating Islamic holidays, working in traditional and modern industry, and praying in mosques (in the latter three cases, of course, there is little basis on which to verify beyond a reasonable doubt that the photos were even taken during the PRC era, or in some cases even taken in China).

The Chinese Muslims were clearly under heavy new constraints. All "religion" was not shut down immediately in 1949, but the Chinese Muslims who were active were cautious, and the available evidence suggests that their activities were far less extensive than in the Republican era. For the time being, some Republican-era Muslim presses (or their institutional inheritors, managed by members of the same networks of people) were able to continue publishing works

[799] Chinese Islamic Association, *Qianjin zhong de Zhongguo Musilin*/*Muslimu al-Sin fi-l-taqaddum*/*Chinese Muslims in Progress*, [pages not numbered].

on doctrine, Arabic language, and history into the 1950s. While these superficially resembled some works produced in the Republican era, their quantity was almost certainly less, and their form in certain ways also reflected the pressures of the times. In Beijing, for example, the *Huimin dazhong* ("Muslim Masses") press, an inheritor to *Yuehua* housed in the Dongsi Mosque, published a translation of portions of the Quran side by side with the Arabic original in 1953, though only the Arabic title, and not the Chinese, identified this work as dealing with the Quran; the term *gulan* ("Quran") did not appear in the Chinese title or the Chinese portions of the content.[800] Similarly, in Shanghai, the Chinese Islamic Bookstore (*Zhongguo huijiao shuju*; see Chapter One) published works on Arabic morphology, pronunciation, and grammar as late as 1957, which in some cases were direct continuations of publication projects begun in the late Republican era.[801]

Many leading Republican-era imams, Chinese Azharites, and lay Muslim intellectuals remained active in whatever capacities were possible. Ma Songting was quiet compared to Da Pusheng, but served as a deputy director of both the Chinese Islamic Association and the Chinese Islamic Classic Texts Institute (*Zhongguo yisilanjiao jingxue yuan*), and also participated in the Second, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Chinese People's Political Consultative Confernces. In between, however, he was accused in 1957 of being one of the "Six Major Ethnic Minority Rightists" (*shaoshu minzu liu da youpai*). In the 1980s, Ma—by then in his late eighties and nineties—continued to appear publicly with the Chinese Islamic Association in order to

[800] Pang Shiqian, ed., *Al-Khatm: Mukhtarat min ayat al-Quran al-karim* [The Great Seal: Selected Verses from the Noble Quran] / *Heti: A-han duizhao* [The *Heti*: A Comparison of the Arabic and Chinese] (Beijing: Huimin dazhong shushe, 1953).

[801] Mai Junsan, ed., *Awen biaozhun pinyin duben* [*A Reader for Standard Spelling in Arabic*] (Shanghai: Zhongguo huijiao shuju, 1947); Mai Junsan, ed., *Awen pinyin* [*Spelling in Arabic*] / *al-Qawa'id al-hija'iyya* [*Rules of the Alphabet*] (Shanghai: Zhongguo huijiao shuju, 1957.

demonstrate, much as the organization sought to do in the 1950s, that Islam and Muslims in China were happy, well-treated, and allowed to practice their religion.[802]

For some Chinese Muslims, the choice to stay in China itself depended entirely on a combination of chance and the consideration of one's family, friends, associates. The artist Zhang Hongtu recalls that in 1949, as the CCP stood poised to take over China, his father Zhang Bingduo (the former Chinese Azharite with a fundamentalist streak, and with connections to Pingliang) purchased tickets for the entire family to escape to Hong Kong, but a "Muslim professor of history" from Beijing convinced him to remain in China and move there. In Beijing, Zhang proceeded to work with the PRC's Central Minority Affairs Commission (*Zhongyang minzu shiwu weiyuanhui*)—of which Da Pusheng also was a member—and produced Arabic-language propaganda for the government publication *Zhongguo musilin* (Chinese Muslim).[803] The identity of the Muslim professor who convinced Zhang to stay in Beijing is unknown, but there is only a small set of possibilities.

Regardless of how or why Chinese Muslims remained in China, the rise of the PRC necessitated rhetorical acrobatics from them on multiple fronts. Some ironies naturally resulted. In the Northwest, for example, Imam Ma Xiaoshi was moved to write *Xibei huizu geming shi* (*The History of the Northwest Hui Revolutions*, 1951). Ma's history recast the Gansu Muslim uprisings of the nineteenth century, the specter of which haunted both the GMD state and the integrationist Chinese Muslim elites for the entire Republican era, as evidence of Chinese

[802] Ma is pictured, for example, reading the *Fatiha* to open the Fourth Conference of Chinese Muslims (6-15 April 1980), in the Chinese Islamic Association propaganda book *The Religious Life of Chinese Muslims* (Beijing: Chinese Islamic Association, 1980), p. 12.

[803] Ma Xiaoshi, *Xibei huizu geming shi* [The History of the Northwest Hui Revolutions] (1951).

Muslims' "revolutionary" credentials (revisionist histories of the Taiping Rebellion tended to follow a similar pattern).

Some faired relatively well, at least in terms of their careers. Ma Jian, the former Chinese Azharite and translator of the Quran (see Chapters Four and Five), founded the Arabic department at Peking University, where his students became the first generation of non-Muslim Chinese to learn reliable Arabic. Whether Ma appreciated it or not, this development carried the potential to finally undo the role the Chinese Muslim elites had played for decades as intermediaries between the Chinese state and Muslim countries. Personally, Ma appears not to have faced significant persecution. In fact, he served as a translator on multiple occasions for high-level government officials.[804]

In 1954, Ma came into brief contact with one of his Indonesian acquaintances, Asa Bafagih, who was touring China that year. Bafagih was the founder and editor of the Jakarta daily *Duta Masjarakat* (*Envoy of Society*), the periodical of the Nahdatul Ulama, and was one of the Indonesian leaders who was willing to criticize the PRC. Hong Liu writes that Bafagih was "dismayed about a Muslim scholar"—Ma Jian—who had written a verse in praise of Mao, which Bafagih found un-Islamic (not to mention clearly inconsistent with indications of Ma's earlier engagement with Salafi thought, as well as the broad approval he had received from the likes of Rashid Rida, Shakib Arslan, and Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib). According to Hong, Bafagih felt that Ma, though well-regarded in Indonesia before 1949, had suffered a "loss of intellectual independence." Re-encountering Ma in 1954, Bafagih wrote that he seemed different, and was

[804] Li Zhenzhong, *Xuezhe de zhuiqiu: Ma Jian zhuan* [*The Scholars' Pursuit: A Biography of Ma Jian*] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2000).

willing to declare to Bafagih that Chinese Muslims "'have enjoyed equal rights and could look forward to a brilliant future.'"[805]

Somewhat similarly, Bai Shouyi (see Chapters Two and Three) continued his work as a historian of China and, when politically possible, as a historian of Islam in China. Bai, a Muslim of Kaifeng lineage, came to be regarded as one of China's preeminent "Marxist" historians, and avoided persecution during the Cultural Revolution by serving, at Zhou Enlai's request, as the supervisor of a new edition of the *Twenty-Four Histories* (*Ershisi shi*), the authoritative historical record of China's imperial dynasties. In the 1950s, however, and again from the 1980s to his death in 2000, Bai again turned to the history of Islam in China, editing several reference works and primary source compilations that are used to this day.[806]

Then there was Imam Pang Shiqian. According to Pang's memoirs, the students in his Azhar delegation earned their *shahadas* from al-Azhar in 1942, and were preparing to return home "to serve their country and their religion." The dangers of traveling during the war prevented that, however, particularly since Japan had invaded Hong Kong, Singapore, peninsular Malaya, and beyond in the winter of 1941-42. Pang eventually received a travel allowance from the GMD government in 1944, but since the Burma Road was closed, the only way to travel home would be by airplane, for which the 100-pound allowance would be insufficient. Pang asked Chen Kemao, an official at the GMD's Cairo consulate, about the possibility of securing passage on a U.S. military plane to Chongqing. Pang recalls that the Americans agreed, but the GMD government refused after half a year of silence. They therefore approached the GMD

[805] Hong Liu, *China and the Shaping of Indonesia, 1949-1965* (Singapore: NUS Press, in association with Kyoto UP, 2011), pp. 122-23. Liu, pp. 119-23, discusses the widely diverging positions of Indonesia's leaders toward the PRC and the question of China's Muslims.

[806] Cherif-Chebbi, "Bai Shouyi"; Benite, "From Literati to Ulama."

Ministry of Education for a second travel allowance. Finally, Ma Tianying intervened and after much "hard work and discreet inquiries" secured steamer passage from Port Said to Hong Kong on 17 April 1946. Pang's memoir, *Aiji jiunian*, is also a diary of that journey.[807]

The period of the Chinese Civil War and early PRC was in fact a very productive one for Pang. One could argue that he was beginning to apply his expansive, Azhar-inspired conception of *ijtihad*, in more specific ways than before, to the all-important question of how to reform Islam in China and how to secure Muslims' status there (implicitly, whether the GMD prevailed or the CCP). In 1946-48, in addition to working on his memoir, he produced at least ten articles and a new book-length translation, all connected in varying ways to the problem of how Muslims should be represented in a large non-Muslim country and how they could balance national, local, and Islamic identities.

Viewed in isolation, these new works of Pang's might appear to be simply "news." Taken together, at times allegorically, in the context of China's ongoing civil war, however, they represent a systematic examination of the contemporary politics and thought of the Islamic world, in search of appropriate models to apply to the interrelated problems of reforming Islam in China, achieving equitable representation for Chinese Muslims, and promoting their continued interconnectedness with Muslims outside China. One article, "On the Arab League," was published in the famous (non-Muslim) Shanghai-based newspaper *Dongfang zazhi* (*Eastern Miscellany*). This article used the example of the newly formed Arab League to explore the question of how regional federations might offer one practical form of middle ground between various scales of political loyalty. At the same time, Pang's article offered a sympathetic discussion of the Arab world's Kurds, Berbers, and Christian and Jewish minorities: despite the

[807] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 32.

differences of ethnicity and even religion, Pang appreciated the similarities between these groups' predicament and that of the Chinese Muslims.[808] Another article on the minority question, this one published in *Yuehua*, concerned the fate of Muslims in Yugoslavia.[809]

Meanwhile, Pang had also become interested in the fate of Islam in Indonesia: though a Muslim-majority country, Indonesia was still important for Chinese Muslims because it was beginning to face the prospect of having to decide what Islam's formal relationship should be to the modern state. Sparked by that country's struggle for independence from the Dutch (and no doubt encouraged by his Jawi classmates at al-Azhar), Pang's interest in Indonesia and its relevance for Chinese Muslims formed the topic of his third article, published in *Huimin qingnian* (*Muslim Youth*).[810] Yet another article concerned Afghanistan, where Shah Mahmud Khan, prime minister from 1946 to 1953 and an uncle of the young King Mohammed Zahir Shah, was beginning to experiment with political reforms.[811] India's partition and the creation of Pakistan is oddly absent from Pang's list, but other Chinese Muslims, including Hai Weiliang, had already been writing on those topics for several years in *Yuehua* and elsewhere.[812]

Finally, Pang's last new article in *Yuehua*, and the third-to-last article in the journal overall, was titled "Israel and Jewish Expansionism" (*Yisilie yu youtai qinlue zhuyi*). Published

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[808] Pang Shiqian, "Lun Alabo lianmeng [On the Arab League]," *Dongfang zazhi* 42/11 (1946): pp. 4-8.

[809] Pang Shiqian, "Nansilafu de Musilin yu qi xianzai de zhengzhi dongxiang [The Present Political Trend among Yugoslav Muslims]," *Yuehua*, 25 August 1947.

[810] Pang Shiqian, "Wei Yinni zhanzheng xiang quanguo tongbao qingming [An Appraisal of the Indonesian War for Coreligionists Nationwide]," *Huimin qingnian* 3 (1947): pp. 13-14. This appears to have been a transcript of a radio broadcast. Pang published a similar set of articles in *Yuehua*: Pang Shiqian, "Yindunixia gongheguo [A Republic of Indonesia]," *Yuehua* 5 March 1946; "Yindunixia gongheguo (xu) [A Republic of Indonesia (cont'd)]," *Yuehua* 5 April 1946; "Yindunixia gongheguo (xu) [A Republic of Indonesia (cont'd)]," *Yuehua* 5 June 1946.

[811] Pang Shiqian, "Xin Afuhan [A New Afghanistan]," *Yuehua*, 15 March 1948, pp. 18-20.

[812] Pang discusses India and Indian Muslims to an extent in *AJJN*, though there too the analysis is not extensive.

on 15 June 1948, exactly one month after the establishment of the state of Israel and the beginning of the Arab-Israeli War, this article opened by distinguishing between the four Arabic terms *'ibrani* ("Hebrew," which Pang says refers primarily to language), *Isra'il* ("Israel," which Pang says refers to the "nation"; Ch. *minzu*), *yahud* ("Jews," which Pang says refers primarily to religious identity), and *sihyuni* ("Zionist," which Pang says refers to Theodor Herzl's movement begun in 1895, but which he says "means expansionism"; Ch. *qinlue zhuyi*).[813] Pang evidently meant to continue the essay (this first installment only covered the ancient Jewish history), but *Yuehua* ceased publication after the issue in which it appeared. Pang's discussion of this topic, however, should not necessarily be seen as an expression of academic interest in Jewish history, ancient Near Eastern history, or even contemporary Middle Eastern politics, let alone as an indication of any deeply held biases (we already saw above, for example, that Pang identified the situation of Middle Eastern Jews as similar to that of Chinese Muslims). Rather, writing in Chinese, for Chinese Muslims, from China, and at the moment when the CCP appeared certain to take over the country (they would already control Beijing by 1 January 1949), Pang's research on Zionism is probably best understood as a new meditation on the question of whether two peoples with certain imagined differences between them could peacefully coexist in a single territory with multiple histories and multiple significances for those peoples. This seems especially clear considering the article in the context of Pang's other writings at this time.

While Pang was researching and writing on these only seemingly unrelated topics, he was simultaneously continuing to think through the question of what must be done in China. One article falling in this latter category, published in the relatively obscure Muslim periodical

[813] Pang Shiqian, "Yisilie yu youtai qinlue zhuyi [Israel and Jewish Expansionism]," *Yuehua* 15 June 1948, pp. 14-16.

Zhenguang, concerned the "Past and future of the Chinese Azharites." Pang recounted his colleagues multiple accomplishments in Cairo in order to recommend the continuation of such work in years to come, which in turn would produce sound answers to the above questions concerning the fate of Islam and Muslims in China.[814] The second was his call for systematic reform of the education of *hailifan* (imam's assistants) across China (see Chapter Five), which he hoped could form a basis for strengthening an Azhar-style modernist curriculum and democratizing the practice of *ijtihad* among China's Muslims. A broad conceptualization and equally broad institutionalization of *ijtihad* among China's *ulama* was Pang's solution to the question of how to reform Islam in China.

The question of reforming Islam in China was directly related to the question of how to promote stronger contact with Muslims outside China. Beginning during his time at al-Azhar, Pang had increasingly come to believe that regional federations could be a good way to institutionalize international cooperation between like-minded Muslims. Pang's memoir suggests that this supranational dimension of the larger problem had occupied him during his journey home, as he was sailing by or through some of the lands about which he was writing, and as he had the opportunity to meet old friends. While stopped in Singapore in early August 1946, Pang found his classmate from al-Azhar, Tan Sri Hajj Hassan Yunus, the future Mufti of Johor. Hassan (as Pang identifies him) had returned to Malaya from Egypt in 1940, after which he experienced the brunt of the Japanese invasion and occupation. Sitting together on the evening of 9 August (a *jum'a*), Pang, Hassan, and other unnamed Malayan friends from al-Azhar met and talked about life in Cairo and about Japanese and British imperialism. The conversation soon

[814] Pang Shiqian, "Zhongguo huijiao liu aiji xuesheng de yange yu jianglai [The Chinese Muslim Students in Egypt, Past and Future]," *Zhenguang* 1/6 (1946): pp. 5-9.

turned to their hopes to establish a "Far East Islamic Federation," to include India, Indonesia (with Malaya), and China, and modeled somewhat on the Arab League. According to Pang, the plan was that each country would have its own branch association, and that there would be no permanent general assembly, but rather that a general assembly would convene once per year, each time in a different location, with participants drawn from the three countries. As Pang recalled, "We had discussed these ideas often with our Indian and Indonesian classmates while in Cairo. This time, however, we felt that the goal was somewhat closer at hand. There was also the issue of the Malay Union. They had been watching the progress of the Arab League, and very much hoped to succeed in forming their own organization along these lines in the near future."[815] The idea of a Far East Islamic Federation, which never came to fruition, reflected the aloofness people like Pang and Hassan had sometimes experienced from Arab Muslims in Cairo, and the belief that South, Southeast, and East Asian Muslims deserved greater say in the affairs of the Islamic world, even if for no reason other than their huge numbers.

At the same time, however, it also reflected their conviction, still intact and still shared, that new ways remained to apply what they had learned in Cairo to their home countries and their future cooperation. Indeed, at that very moment Pang was working on translating the Azhar Sheikh Yusuf al-Dijwi's work *Risalat al-salam wa rusul al-Islam* (*The Message of Peace and the Prophets of Islam*), a new, staunchly modernst defense of Islam against the accusations of Orientalistm and Islamophobia, which al-Dijwi had dedicated—seemingly incongruously, but in fact not—to "the people of America." Many in Egypt had eagerly followed the developments at the San Francisco United Nations Conference on International Organization of April-June 1945, feeling that Muslims were insufficiently represented in the process of creating the UN; al-Dijwi

[815] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 55.

perhaps hoped that restating the argument for Islam's rationality, emphasis on knowledge, and historical "contributions" to humanity would help rectify the situation. Pang's translation, *Heping zhi shiming* (*The Mission of Peace*), reorganized the contents of al-Dijwi's original to make these points even clearer.[816] In the Chinese context, however, the term *heping*, "peace," carried a special additional weight at this historical moment, having arisen ubiquitously in the calls of an exhausted population for the CCP and GMD to give up their conflict. In other words, Pang was attempting to link an Azhar-inspired Islamic modernist understanding of the meaning of Islam to the most important social and political imperative of the time in China: a master stroke of his expansive *ijtihad*. Apart from this, he no doubt also wanted to portray Islam and Muslims in the most positive light possible if indeed they were now going to live under communism.

For any of Pang's aspirations to work, however, China would have to solve the problem of Muslims' political representation. To that end, the elaborate thought processes described above led Pang to the perhaps surprising conclusion quoted at the beginning of this chapter:

> China today is starting on the path to democracy. But it would appear that it does not yet have a suitable manner of dealing with its several million Muslims. It continues to follow oppressive and guarded policies that the future will not vindicate. In the recent war of resistance, Muslims made many sacrifices for their country. But what of their rights? No matter, rights are to be claimed, not simply given. At the San Francisco conference, all parties had equal representation, yet Muslims were kept from participating. In the upcoming Republican Congress, I fear Muslims will not be allowed to choose representatives in proportion to their numbers. The Communists' minority nationalities policy appears correct; clear-headed people might give it some consideration.[817]

[816] Pang divided the Chinese version into three sections: Islam and Modernity, The Prophet Muhammad, and The Quran.

[817] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 40.

Pang's optimism about communism was apparently enough for him to stay in Beijing after 1949. Yet Pang may have misunderstood communism. One of his earliest publications in *Yuehua* was a translation from *al-Islah*, a journal in Mecca, titled "The Situation of Muslim Peoples Living under Soviet Rule" (Su'e zhi xia de Yisilan minzu zhuangkuang). This article summarized the Russian Revolution of 1917 and noted that under Soviet nationalities policy, "separate peoples were free to establish their own independent states." Pang noted that many Muslim groups of various ethnicities were among those allowed such autonomy in the Soviet system. By contrast, we have seen that Pang was critical of the GMD's homogenizing and Sinicizing nation-building policies, as well as Chinese Muslim elites' cooperation with that vision. For Pang, who lacked direct experience of the Soviet Union or of the CCP, the minority autonomy ostensibly offered by the communist system may have appeared to be a preferable alternative. In particular, if Chinese Muslims had a greater ability to govern their own affairs than the GMD had allowed, perhaps this would pave the way for instituting the broad *ijtihad* Pang believed was the key to reforming Islam in China.

Pang appears to have given this optimism a chance immediately upon the CCP takeover. Remaining in Beijing, he founded the journal *Huimin dazhong* ("Muslim Masses") and the abovementioned publishing house by the same name.[818] The first issue appeared in November 1949, very soon after the establishment of the PRC.[819] Some familiar figures, such as Ma Jian and Ma Jinpeng, published articles in this journal. The most significant articles, however, were those by Pang himself. The editor's preface to the inaugural issue was titled "The Result of

[818] Beijing Municipal Archives 022-006-01119 (Huimin yinshua guang). This document contains the tax records of the Huimin dazhong press, which claimed strikingly high levels of funding: a mystery.

[819] Only two issues remain extant.

Seven Hundred Years of Struggle" (*Qibai nian douzheng de zongjie*): an attempt to recast the history of Islam in China since the Mongol era in a communistic vocabulary. In the same issue, Pang also published an article titled "After Reading 'On the People's Democratic Dictatorship'" (*Du 'lun renmin minzhu zhuanzheng' hou*). In this article, Pang reiterated Mao Zedong's dismissal of the contradiction between democracy and dictatorship on the basis that if democracy were given to the "reactionaries," they would misuse it and the "revolution" would not be fulfilled. Upon reading this, Pang claims,

> I was reminded of the Prophet Muhammad, who managed to complete his mission in the short span of twenty-three years, emerging victorious. The most important reason for this success was that he enacted his policies in a spirit of democratic dictatorship. The Noble Quran states: "The messengers of God—Muhammad and his Companions—dealt severely with the infidels, but showed great compassion among their own people."[820]

Here, "companions" of the Prophet was translated using the ubiquitous communist term for "comrades" (*tongzhi men*). As optimistic as Pang had been, this article appears to signal his already growing perception that Chinese communism was a danger to Islam and Muslims and needed to be accommodated in whatever way necessary.

By this time, Pang was employed teaching Arabic at Beijing Normal University. In 1952, he was also a founder of the Chinese Islamic Association. After the early 1950s, however, the sources both by and about Pang fall silent. The only publicly available information states that Pang "died of illness" in 1958.[821] He was only fifty-six at the time, and had been extremely productive through the early 1950s (and consistently for decades before that). Meanwhile, the

[820] Surat al-Fath 48:29. Perhaps the reference to the Prophet "completing his mission in twenty-three years" is a very subtle critique that maintains the moral superiority of Islam. As Mao pointed out at the beginning of "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," it took him twenty-eight years from the founding of the CCP to achieve his vision.

[821] For example, Feng Jinyuan, "Zhongguo yisilan jiaoyu jia Pang Shiqian [The Chinese Muslim Educator Pang Shiqian]," *Zhongguo musilin* 1999 5 (1999): pp. 36-38.

Anti-Rightist Campaign, which targeted Pang's associate Ma Songting, had begun in July 1957. Mao announced the Great Leap Forward in January 1958.

Conclusion: Islam, Cold War, Decolonization, Nation-Statism

As war became civil war and civil war became cold war, the Chinese Muslims were both divided from each other and increasingly marginalized in both China and Taiwan. On Taiwan, Bai Chongxi and his anti-communist platform became less integral to the Taiwanese GMD government's policies as the 1950s wore on, in more or less direct correlation to the waning clout of the Chinese Muslim leadership overall. As that was happening, the former leaders of the Near East and South Seas Delegations, Wang Zengshan and Ma Tianying—staunch nationalists both—nevertheless elected to become permanent residents or naturalized citizens (respectively) of the Muslim countries in which they spent the greatest amounts of time: Turkey and Malaysia. On the Mainland, the picture was far starker. Chinese Muslims either cooperated fully with the state or met unclear, but probably often violent, ends. At the same time, the rest of the Islamic world was moving farther away from the Chinese Muslims, with decolonization pushing each new nation-state to follow its own path. Muslims outside China, even when they were not being imprisoned by new leaders such as Nasser, were distracted by the all-encompassing conflict of the Cold War, and by politics closer to home.

Although rarely discussed openly in the available documents, a hugely important development for the Chinese Muslims on both sides of the GMD-CCP conflict was the discovery that Chinese Muslims were not nearly as numerous as they had been believed to be during the Republican era. The major and minor figures throughout this study repeated time and again that China's Muslims numbered perhaps fifty million or more. This number, originating in unscientific Orientalist guesswork, became standardized and traveled surprising distances. In

1953, however, the PRC conducted China's first successful census and discovered that Muslims in China numbered only ten million. There is, of course, the question of how they counted—as well as, grimly, the question of how many may have died in the tremendously violent preceding decades. Nevertheless, fifty million seemed out of reach. For the GMD government and the Chinese Muslims in Taiwan, the 1953 PRC census would have completely taken the air out of their argument that the Muslims in China could contribute significantly to resisting the CCP and eventually retaking the Mainland. For Chinese Muslims in the PRC, meanwhile, the discovery simply meant that they were much less powerful to resist the state. The Chinese Islamic Association's 1956 propaganda publication *The Religious Life of Chinese Muslims* was one of the first publicly available materials to state the Chinese Muslims numbered only ten million.

Fazlur Rahman, the Pakistani-American historian and philosopher of Islam who was director of the Central Institute of Islamic Research in Karachi in the 1960s, wrote at the end of the introduction to his work *Islam*:

> The most interesting factor in this picture [of the world Muslim population] is the number of Chinese Muslims. In his *'Alaqat al-'Arab* [sic] *wa'-l-Sin* (Cairo 1370/1950), Badr al-Din al-Sini [i.e. Hai Weiliang] asserts that Muslims constitute 10 per cent of the total Chinese population. In the Bandung Conference, the Chinese Prime Minister, Mr. Chou En-lai, stated that the Muslims in China are 12 per cent of the total population and hence outnumber the Muslims in India. However, the Chinese official census figures put the Muslim population at 10 million. It should be pointed out, however, that since religion is not counted as a factor in the distribution of population in Communist China and the distribution is classified on a tribal basis, only those tribes are listed as Muslims, particularly the 'Hui' tribes, which are 100 per cent Muslim.[822]

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[822] Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, second edition with a new foreword by John E. Woods (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966, 2002), p. 9. Indonesia observers who were familiar with Islamic relations between that country and China were also confused by the huge discrepancy between Chinese Muslims' claims as to their population size in the early twentieth century, versus the findings of the 1953 PRC census. See form example Willard A. Hanna, "The Case of the Forty Million Missing Muslims," *American Universities Field Staff* (Southeast Asian Studies), September 1956, cited in Liu, *China and the Shaping of Indonesia*.

Events such as the failure of the Taipei Mosque project or the beginning of the Anti-Rightist Campaign merely confirmed what Chinese Muslims on both sides of the Strait had feared for at least a decade, and in some ways for far longer than that: that they would be forgotten by the Islamic world, that they would not play a meaningful role in the creation of a more enlightened political and social order, and that they would be left at the mercy of an ideological and majoritarian nation-state. In Taiwan, at least, marginalization mostly only meant retirement and obscurity. In the PRC, particularly during the Cultural Revolution, it meant the two worst outcomes imaginable: death and the forced abandonment of Islam.

CONCLUSION

> In the beginning, Islam made no distinctions based on nationality. The commonality of religion was enough to make the believers one family. The Quran says: "Verily all the believers are brothers." It also says: "The noblest among you are the most righteous in the sight of God." The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Arabs are not superior to non-Arabs, and white is not superior to black." Previously, all Muslims abided by this teaching and spoke not of national distinctions. Recently, however, because the tide of global thought flows toward nation-statism [*guojia zhuyi*], each person puts their own nation-state first. Islam has now seen the surge in this tide, and it too sets out on the path of the nation-state. Everyone sees the nation-state as primary, and religion as secondary.
> -Pang Shiqian, "Nation-Statism's Impact on Religious Feeling," late 1940s[823]

Islamic Modernism in China

This study has analyzed how modern Chinese Muslims' rediscovery of the Islamic world outside China both conditioned and was conditioned by their elites' political priorities within China. It argues that Chinese Muslims' selective engagement with Islamic modernism did not disrupt but facilitated the nationalization of Muslim ("Hui") identity. From Qing collapse through the Second World War, Chinese Muslim elites increasingly adopted Islamic modernist and Arabo-centric notions through otherwise highly complex processes of textual transnationalism. As a result, several forms of "public Islam" took shape in response to the political circumstances of the time, each of which embodied the ethos of transnationalist integrationism and the specific ideas of Islamic modernism in different ways. In the context of the GMD's efforts to retain control of China's vast frontiers, Chinese Muslim elites proceeded to wield Islamic modernist and Arabo-centric claims of authority and authenticity in support of GMD nation-building efforts across China's largely Muslim northwestern frontiers. In the process, they brought to bear the material and moral resources of government organs, warlords, civic associations, print media,

[823] Pang, *Aiji jiunian*, p. 76.

and schools. The notion of "contribution" to China definitively emerged in the early to mid-1930s in response to Han Islamophobia, but soon became greatly intensified and re-applied in the context of China's war with Japan. At the same time, in dialogue with leading Chinese intellectuals and Muslims across the Indian Ocean and Middle East, certain Chinese Muslims—particularly Pang Shiqian—strove to articulate a more inclusive vision of both Chinese nationalism and the global Islamic community (*umma*), expressed in his quintessentially modernist call for an expansive, extra-legal, and democratized *ijtihad*. On the whole, wherever else they may have differed, Chinese Muslim elites did not set their transnational and national solidarities in opposition, but rather argued that greater contact with Islam outside China would reinforce and enrich Muslims' integration in China. Though they themselves became sidelined from high politics in the era of Cold War and decolonization, the Chinese Muslim elites' narratives of history and identity, while contingent, have nevertheless become normalized as the virtually uncontested canonical truth of Chinese Islam to this day.

That is not to say that there is any real unanimity about what Islam in China is, either from the perspective of the state or from that of the Chinese Muslims themselves. At the National Library of China in Beijing, for example, there is no separate section for the "Hui minority nationality" in the otherwise well-populated "Literatures in Ethnic Minority Nationality Languages" department. When I discussed with the librarians the fact that many members of the group now known as the Hui had published works in Arabic during the twentieth century and earlier, they apologized and explained that I would probably not find that sort of thing in their department (again, the underlying problem being that Arabic is not a "native" language for the Chinese Muslims). It was a long shot to begin with. Meanwhile, visiting mosques across Gansu and Ningxia and even in Ma Jian's home province of Yunnan, I encountered imams and others

who were eager to point out that Ma Jian's translation of the Quran contained errors of theology. "Where is God? God is not above," they corrected, "God is everywhere. Why? Because God is light."[824] In other words, there is evidence that Sufi-informed theologies survived the propaganda of the GMD and its elite Muslim allies as well as the catastrophes of the Mao era.

What, then, is the significance of Republican-era Chinese Muslim elites' transnationalist integrationism for Islam in China today?

Canonizing Contingency: Islamic Modernism and the Ethnogenesis of the *Huizu*

As I have shown, Muslims in China during the early twentieth century were empirically fragmented, with the urban coastal Chinese Muslim elites allied to the GMD asserting that Chinese Muslims were in fact a single community, and attempting to speak for them on that basis. The notion that certain figures and certain developments discussed in this study represented *the* trend and *the* consensus of modern Chinese Islam was already emerging in the period itself. Recall, for example, Pang's statement on Wang Kuan:

> God be praised, for the twentieth century arrived, and with it the modernist *ulama* [*al-ʿulama al-mujaddidun*]. Among them was the late Hajj ʿAbd al-Rahman Wang Haoran [i.e. Wang Kuan], who visited Egypt and Turkey in 1905. He requested the Ottoman Caliph Abdülhamid II's assistance in spreading Islam in China. Abdülhamid II therefore sent a religious and educational delegation to Beijing chaired by Sheikh Ali Rida, accompanied by Sheikh Hafiz.[825]

Pang's statement reflected a larger celebration of Wang Kuan as the founding figure of Islamic modernism in China. The conferral of this status began in the pages of *Yuehua* during the Republican era itself, but was later resumed by journals such as *Huizu yanjiu* (*Research on the*

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[824] I must ask for the reader's indulgence here. While these in-person interactions speak to the argument of this study, citing individuals or even mentioning locations by name could potentially endanger the people involved.

[825] Pang, *China and Islam*, p. 69, originally translated in Chen, "Re-Orientation: The Chinese Azharites between *Umma* and Third World," p. 37.

Hui) and *Zhongguo musilin* (*China Muslim*) after the 1980s (when it became permissible to speak of matters of "religion" again).[826] An equivalent process of canonization took place for the Four Great Imams—Da Pusheng, Wang Jingzhai, Ha Decheng, and Ma Songting.

Along with Wang Kuan and the Four Great Imams, *Xinghui pian* was also remembered by Chinese Muslim *ulama* and intellectuals in both the Republican era and more recent times as the first publication in their modernist movement. This was the case for both transnationalist and integrationist reasons: it was allegedly the first Chinese Muslim publication to address the need for reform of Islam generally, and it also attempted to relate that reform to specific questions of Chinese national and Chinese Muslim communal interest.

By contrast, Ma Lianyuan of Yunnan receives less emphasis than Wang Kuan or the Tokyo group because, despite being very good at Arabic, he was less explicit about political integrationism.

It is not entirely clear where the phrase "Four Great Imams" came from.[827] Based on the contents of this study, we might propose a revision: they were the four most pro-state imams. That being said, there were still important differences. Da Pusheng appears to have been the most well-connected and most proactively collaborationist. Ma Songting, meanwhile, was the least political of the four. During the PRC, including Ma as one of the Four Great Imams became

[826] Ding Yimin, ed., *Zhongguo huizu mingren cidian* [Dictionary of Chinese Muslim Personages] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1995), p. 269; Ma Shanting, "Wang Haoran ahong yishi (yi) [The Passing of Imam Wang Haoran (I)]," *Yuehua* 6/19-20-21 (1934), p. 25; Ma Shanting, "Wang Haoran ahong yishi (er) [The Passing of Imam Wang Haoran (II)]," *Yuehua* 6/31-32-33 (1934), pp. 29-30; "Beiping: Jinian Wang Haoran ahong [Remembering Imam Wang Haoran of Beijing]," *Yuehua* 7/9 (1935), p. 28; Ma Shanting, "Wang Haoran ahong yishi (san) [The Passing of Imam Wang Haoran (III)]," *Yuehua* 7/15 (1935), p. 12; Yin Boqing, "Wang Haoran ahong zhuanlue: sheng yu Daoguang nian [A Brief Biography of Imam Wang Haoran, Born in the Daoguang Era]," *Zhongguo musilin* 2 (1982): p. 8.

[827] See Aubin, "Islam on the Wings of Nationalism," n16, n17, n18, and n20. See also Da Jie, "Da Pusheng ahong zhuanlue [Brief Biography of Imam Da Pusheng]," *Zhongguo musilin* 1 (1984): pp. 18-26.

a way of co-opting him, whereas for Da it was a way of expressing approval for and making a positive example out of his proactively pro-state initiatives. Wang and Ha fall somewhere in the middle. Wang's translation of *aiguo aijiao* has become completely naturalized and universal, today even applied to other religions in China such as Buddhism. Ha certainly had the state's interests in mind as well, for example when he interfered with Tang Yichen's Japanese-sponsored Hajj delegation. Ha, too, however, was not on the same level as Da.

In addition to the imams, the lay Chinese Muslim intellectuals played a hugely important role in canonizing certain narratives of Chinese Muslim identity and the history of Islam in China. Foremost among these is Bai Shouyi. More than that of any other figure, Bai's work has had consequences for present scholarship on Islam in China. In the 1950s, and again from the 1980s to his death in 2000, Bai also compiled many of the documentary collections and reference works that scholars to this day have used to understand "the" history of Islam and Muslims in China. This work, however, though often of clear academic value, must be seen in the context of the ethos of transnationalist integrationism. Bai's priorities were to demonstrate that Chinese Muslims belonged in China and had long become Sinicized; to argue that the Hui represented a unique ethnicity, distinguished not only by religion but also by history and culture, and distinct from the Uyghurs and Muslims elsewhere; and thereby, no doubt, to help the Chinese Muslims avoid oppression and misunderstanding in the way he thought best: by asserting their Chineseness.[828]

Meanwhile, as we have seen in Chapters Three and Six, a similar image of the Chinese Muslims became enshrined in the rhetoric of the Chinese Islamic Association, which issued a

[828] For a discussion of Bai's role in Chinese Muslim historiography, see Benite, "From Literati to Ulama"; Cherif-Chebbi, "Bai Shouyi." For an example of how Bai's compilations have been used in recent scholarship, see Atwill, "Blinkered Visions."

new publication in 1980 under the same title as their 1956 propaganda book, *The Religious Life of Chinese Muslims*.[829]

Chinese Muslims beyond the Mainland also continued to build on aspects of transnationalist integrationism, but not in the mode of ethnicization (largely irrelevant outside the PRC). Rather, they continued the project of trying to write Chinese Muslims into a broader history of Sino-Islamic "civilizational" exchange. Ma Tianying, Hai Weiliang, and Ding Zhongming all published works in this genre from the late 1940s through at least the 1970s.[830]

China, the Islamic World, and the Chinese Muslims since 1950

From the 1950s, leaders of new secular nation-states in Asia and the Middle East began using a rhetoric of Eastern societies' "ancient civilizations" and "shared values" that bore considerable resemblance to the themes articulated by transnational Islamic thinkers in the interwar period, including the Chinese Muslim elites. The new postcolonial leaders, however, removed Islam from the picture, and instead focused solely on culture. Consider, for example, Gamal Abdel Nasser's statement from his *Philosophy of the Revolution* (*Falsafat al-thawra*, 1953):

> European society had passed through the stages of its evolution in an orderly manner. It crossed the bridge between the Renaissance at the end of the Middle Ages and the nineteenth century step by step. The stages of this evolution systematically succeeded one another. In our case everything was sudden. We lived behind an iron curtain which suddenly collapsed. We were cut off from the world; we renounced its life especially after trade with the East was rerouted to the Cape of Good Hope. European countries eyed us covetously and regarded us as a crossroad to their colonies in the East and the South.
>
> Torrents of ideas and opinions burst upon us which we were, at that stage of our evolution, incapable of assimilating. Our spirits were still in the Thirteenth Century though the symptoms of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

[829] Zhongguo yisilanjiao xiehui [Chinese Islamic Association], *Zhongguo musilin de zongjiao shenghuo* / *Hayat muslimi al-sin al-diniyya* / *The Religious Life of Chinese Muslims* (Beijing: Chinese Islamic Association, 1980).

[830] Ma Tianying, *Huijiao gailun* [*An Introduction to Islam*] (Ipoh: Nanyang shuju, 1949); Badr al-Din al-Sini, *al-'Alaqat bayn al-'Arab wa-l-Sin*; Ding Zhongming, *Huijiao liming shi* [*A History of Islamic Civilization*] (Taipei: 1973).

> infiltrated in their various aspects. Our minds were trying to catch up the [sic] advancing caravan of humanity from which we fell back five centuries or more.[831]

At the 1955 Bandung Conference, where Zhou Enlai included Da Pusheng in his delegation, and where Abdel Nasser and Zhou Enlai got along so well, Zhou stated to the 19 April plenary session:

> The peoples of Asia and Africa created brilliant ancient civilizations and made tremendous contributions to mankind. But, ever since modern times most of the countries of Asia and Africa in varying degrees have been subjected to colonial plunder and oppression, and have thus been forced to remain in a stagnant state of poverty and backwardness. Our voices have been suppressed, our aspirations shattered, and our destiny placed in the hands of others.[832]

The co-optation of interwar Muslims' civilizational discourse coincided more or less exactly with the marginalization of Muslims themselves in Egypt and in the PRC. A year after Abdel Nasser published *Philosophy of the Revolution*, he threw the Muslim Brotherhood leaders in prison, where extreme hardship and torture pushed the group toward fundamentalism. In the two years after that, Abdel Nasser met Zhou (and perhaps Da?) at Bandung, and Egypt recognized the PRC. Abdel Nasser met Zhou on several other occasions, though by the early 1960s, Egypt was leaning clearly toward the Soviets (who could promise much higher levels of weapons and other aid than China).[833] Before the end of the decade, the PRC had abandoned its earlier sense of needing to use the Chinese Muslims to appeal to the Muslims of the world, and instead

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[831] Gamal Abdel Nasser, *Philosophy of the Revolution* (Cairo: 1953), pp. 42-43.

[832] Chou En-lai [i.e. Zhou Enlai], "Premier Chou En-lai's Main Speech at the Plenary Session of the Asian-African Conference, 19 April 1955," in *China Supports the Arab People's Struggle for National Independence: A Selection of Important Documents*, compiled by Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1958), pp. 9-10.

[833] Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, *The Cairo Documents: The Inside Story of Nasser and his Relationship with World Leaders, Rebels, and Statesmen* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1973), pp. 156, 304. See also Christopher J. Lee, ed., *Making a World after Empire: The Bandung Moment and its Political Afterlives* (Athens, OH: Ohio UP, 2010).

targeted most Muslims as reactionaries along with other religious figures under the Anti-Rightist Campaign (1957-58).

For most of the 1960s and 1970s, as China acquired nuclear technology, as its differences with the Soviet Union erupted into conflict, and as nationalist and leftist revolutions continued across the decolonizing world, "revolution" rather than "civilization" became the dominant mode through which China engaged with the Middle East and other regions. At times Beijing portrayed itself as "exporting" revolution, while at other times Palestinians, South Yemenis, and others played a greater role in "importing" it.[834]

As for the Chinese Muslims, in 1958, just as repression was beginning to escalate, the PRC formed a separate "Hui Autonomous Region" out of Ningxia (*Ningxia huizu zizhiqu*), formerly the portion of Gansu governed by Ma Fuxiang and his family, which happens to contain some of the most barren territory in all of China. After that one concession, the Chinese Muslims suffered greatly under the Cultural Revolution, and for the time were forgotten by the outside world. After Deng Xiaoping's reforms, the Chinese Islamic Association resumed its work, and Chinese Muslims resumed going on the Hajj, studying at al-Azhar, and writing their history. As with Chinese society generally, however, the greater openness hoped for in the 1980s largely ended with Tiananmen. From 1993, China became a net oil importer.[835] For the past two

[834] Peter Van Ness, *Revolution and Chinese Foreign Policy: Peking's Support for Wars of National Liberation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970); Lillian Craig Harris, "China's Relations with the PLO," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 7/1 (Autumn 1977): 123-54; Yitzhak Shichor, *The Middle East in China's Foreign Policy*, 1949-1977 (New York: Cambridge UP, 1979); Hashim S.H. Behbehani, *China's Foreign Policy in the Arab World, 1955-75: Three Case Studies* (Boston, MA: Kegan Paul International Ltd., 1981); Hashim S.H. Behbehani, *The Soviet Union and Arab Nationalism, 1917-1966* (New York: Kegan Paul International, 1988); Fred Halliday, *Revolution and Foreign Policy: The Case of South Yemen, 1967-1987* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1990); Odd Arne Westad, ed., *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1963* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press/Cold War International History Project, 1998); and Sergey Radchenko, *Two Suns in the Heavens: The Sino-Soviet Struggle for Supremacy, 1962-1967* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press/Cold War International History Project, 2009).

[835] Jon B. Alterman and John W. Garver, *The Vital Triangle: China, the United States, and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, 2008), pp. 5-7.

decades, the Chinese Muslims have become a further ethnicized and highly scripted sideshow to China's commercial relations with Arab and Central Asian states. The rhetoric of the "New Silk Road" has occasioned a return to the discourse of civilization, but in contrast to the Republican era, the state alone controls the narrative, and not the Chinese Muslims.

The conventional wisdom of informed observers has been that the Hui receive better treatment than the Uyghurs. The extent to which the two groups are treated differently by the state is, in fact, largely traceable to the self-narratives of Chinese Muslims in the Republican era, who were eager to differentiate themselves from the allegedly less developed and more separatist Uyghurs. Uyghurs are indeed treated worse at the time of writing, when a militarized program of ethnic and ideological cleansing is taking place in Xinjiang. At the same time, it is important to note that Chinese Muslim self-narratives that have evolved over the twentieth century have been less successful at combating Islamophobia in Han society generally than they have been at influencing the discourses and practices of the state. In the mid-2010s, for example, popular misunderstandings and stereotypes about Halal are widespread—the very same problem Da Pusheng and Ha Decheng faced in their radio broadcasts in the 1930s. Online forums in China are filled with calls for Muslims to "go back to Arabia."[836] In 2017, the Nangang mosque in Hefei saw a pig's head buried on its grounds, accompanied by online taunts and a death threat directed at the imam.[837] Even more significantly, in early 2018 there was evidence that the state is beginning to apply stricter measures to the Hui, when local officials ordered Muslims in Linxia

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[836] Rose Luqiu and Fan Yang, "Anti-Muslim Sentiment is on the Rise in China," *Washington Post*, 12 May 2017: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/05/12/anti-muslim-sentiment-is-on-the-rise-in-china-we-found-that-the-internet-fuels-and-fights-this/?utm_term=.014f9fddeb30.

[837] Gerry Shih, "Islamophobia in China on the rise fueled by online hate speech," *Independent*, 10 April 2017: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/05/12/anti-muslim-sentiment-is-on-the-rise-in-china-we-found-that-the-internet-fuels-and-fights-this/?utm_term=.014f9fddeb30

not to attend Islamic school during Chinese New Year; Muslims worried about further restrictions that might follow.[838]

The most significant aspect of this most recent episode is its references to "Sinicization" and "Arabization." This is especially true to the extent that China's policies have been cross-pollinated by a "war on terror" discourse originating in the United States. When asked about their policies, the Linxia government stated that "Religious affairs management…adheres to the direction of Sinofication [sic] of religion, and firmly resists and guards against the spread and infiltration of extremist religious ideology." This echoed a new set of restrictions Xi Jinping had announced for religious groups in April 2016.[839] It also reflected an April 2017 directive from the Chinese Islamic Association itself stating that new mosques should "reject the 'Arabisation' of architecture…in favor of traditional Chinese designs." Also significant is the fact that the only two Chinese Muslims willing to be quoted in the article, though expressing some anxiety about the policies, nevertheless felt obliged to declare, respectively, that they were a "patriotic Muslim" and that "We aren't extremists."[840]

In March 2018, the month this study was completed, Chinese Islamic Association chair Yang Faming delivered an address to a full session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), of which he is by definition a member, titled "Rooted in the Fertile Soil of

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[838] Michael Martina, "China's Hui Muslims fearful Chinese New Year education ban a sign of curbs to come," *Reuters*, 16 February 2018: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-islam/chinas-hui-muslims-fearful-chinese-new-year-education-ban-a-sign-of-curbs-to-come-idUSKCN1G1040.

[839] "Religious groups 'must adhere to the leadership of the Communist Party' – Pres. Xi Jinping," *Hong Kong Free Press*, 24 April 2016: https://www.hongkongfp.com/2016/04/24/religious-groups-must-adhere-to-the-leadership-of-the-communist-party-pres-xi-jinping/.

[840] Martina, "Hui Muslims fearful."

Chinese Civilization: Upholding the Sinicization of Our Country's Islam."[841] Yang praised Xi Jinping's promotion of the "healthy development of religion in our country." He also made several more specific comments that echoed and were descended from arguments articulated earlier by the Republican-era Chinese Muslim elites. For example:

> If we survey the history of humanity, we find that the survival and development of any religion hangs on its identification with the country where it exists, its accommodation to the society of that place, and its ability to merge with the local culture. The 1,300-year-long history of Islam's development within China is the best testament to this fact.
>
> After the transmission of Islam to China, it underwent a long-term process of assimilation, and gradually became a uniquely Chinese Islam and the accepted faith of the Hui, Uyghur, and ten other minority ethnicities of our country. During the Ming dynasty, Islamic culture was profoundly integrated into China's traditional Confucian culture. The Muslims among the minority nationalities of the interior (*neidi*) universally spoke Chinese (*hanyu*), adopted Chinese surnames, and wore Chinese-style dress. By conforming to the conditions of Chinese society, Islam laid down permanent roots. During the Qing dynasty, Muslim intellectuals continued to promote the idea of "using Confucianism to explicate scripture." In the recent era, the patriotic spirit of Muslims of all ethnicities has not ceased to strengthen and, under the religious injunction that, "love of one's country is a part of one's faith," the broad masses of Muslims have exhibited extremely passionate love for the country and a determination to resist invasion, especially after the outbreak of the War Against Japan, and willingly joined their fellow countrymen of other ethnicities in the bloody battle…

Such passages clearly echo statements about Islam's alleged long-standing accommodation to "Chineseness" made in earlier decades—for instance those of the Fu'ad Library Preparatory Committee's book request letter of 1936, discussed in Chapter Two; Bai Shouyi's history of materia medica, discussed in Chapter Three; or the Chinese Islamic Near East and South Seas Delegations, discussed in Chapters Three and Four. Subsequent sections of the address,

[841] Yang Faming, "Jianchi zongjiao Zhongguo hua fangxiang shi Zhongguo Yisilanjiao za gen bentu, shengshengbuxi de biyouzhilu [Upholding the Sinicization of Religion, Rooted in Chinese Soil, is the Only Way for Chinese Islam to Grow and Flourish]," speech to Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, 10 March 2018. The full text is accessible at http://www.guancha.cn/yangfaming/2017_09_07_426086_s.shtml.

furthermore, echoed 1950s state propaganda on the Muslims of China, as well as more recent propaganda by the governments of Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping:

> After the founding of New China, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, Muslim brothers and sisters together with their fellow citizens of other ethnicities shared a common fate and actively threw themselves into the great enterprise of socialist construction, reform, and development. Following the same road and united in hearts and minds they built a new era of the Chinese Dream…

Yang's statements on the present, however, departed dramatically from the transnationalist integrationism of the Republican era and early PRC:

> In recent years, under the influence of the complicated and quickly changing international circumstances, there have emerged some problems within the sphere of Islam in our country that are impossible to ignore. For instance, the construction style of some mosques blindly imitates foreign designs and in some spheres of society, the notion of "halal" (*qingzhen*) has been expanded in ways that interfere with the secular customs. Some people "emphasize only the religious precepts and look lightly on the nation's laws," or "only consider themselves believers, not citizens." In the face of these phenomenon, we must maintain a high level of vigilance.
>
> We are keenly aware that persisting with the Chinafication of Islam is the only lesson to be drawn from the successful experience of Islam in our country.[842]

Unlike Da Pusheng and Ha Decheng in 1930s Shanghai, Yang did not even attempt to defend halal, but rather immediately ceded any ground that could breed controversy (Yang was probably referring to the case of certain food delivery services in China, which came under fire from non-Muslim Chinese in mid-2017 for including "too many" halal-friendly options).[843] As for Yang's reference to certain Muslims seeing themselves as "believers, not citizens," it reveals much about ongoing misunderstandings about Islam in Chinese state and society, but nothing about the empirical realities of Muslims' experiences in contemporary China. Perhaps most subtly, and

[842] These helpful translations were produced by Max Oidtmann on 11 March 2018.

[843] See for example Kinling Lo, "New 'halal' option on food delivery app puts China's social media users in a stew: promise to keep specially prepared dishes in separate boxes sparks accusations of pro-Muslim discrimination," *South China Morning Post*, 24 July 2017. Online: http://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/2103876/new-halal-option-food-delivery-app-puts-chinas-social-media-users.

most significantly, Yang simultaneously echoes and misapplies a core logic of Islamic modernist thought, when he criticizes some mosques for "blindly imitating foreign designs" (*zhaoban waiguo moshi*). Scholars of Islam will note the connection to Islamic modernists' polemic promoting reason (*ijtihad*) and rejecting "blind imitation" (*taqlid*) *with respect to questions of Islamic doctrine and practice*, which has played an important role in this study's discussion of Pang Shiqian and his hopes for a more flexible and democratized Chinese Islam. In Yang's speech, however, the pro-reason half of the equation is conveniently excised, whereas the blind imitation half is entirely recast, now critiquing not those Muslims deemed insufficiently modern, but those deemed insufficiently Chinese.

Popular responses to Yang's speech were telling. On the Chinese news website Guanchazhe ("The Investigator"), where a full transcript of the speech was published, user comments proliferated. Few if any categorically defended Chinese Muslims' right to live peacefully in China and practice as they choose. Rather, the dominant disagreement appeared to emerge between a version of Han chauvinism that can accommodate the presence of Muslims in China—and even then, only on certain terms—versus another that cannot. The most popular comment, which had gained 311 "likes" as of 2 April 2018, stated that "The oldest mosque in China was built with Chinese-style architecture; in the last few years, [however], the situation has gotten especially bad in western China." This comment represents the position that Muslims are welcome so long as they make an effort to "become Chinese": a line of reasoning not unlike that of the Republican-era Chinese Muslim elites themselves. Meanwhile, the second most popular comment, with 242 "likes" as of 2 April 2018, declared:

> They won't change the meanings of the scriptures, they won't disband their organizations, they won't give up their Islamic law, they won't abandon their ways of thinking, they won't forsake their privileges. None of it is any use. It is like a path covered in thistles and thorns. To be rid of the ugliest thorns, you must

> pare back the leaves and break the various branches. After that, the path will be clean and clear—but even then only for a short while. As long as there are roots, and fertile earth, and plentiful water, the plant will be back in a matter of months, and the road will be lost.[844]

In contrast to the remark about mosque architecture, this more fully Islamophobic comment expresses skepticism that Muslims can ever "integrate" (even after thirteen centuries), and suggests that such an outcome would be undesirable. Its resemblance to popular Islamophobia in the United States, Europe, and elsewhere is striking, and perhaps not coincidental. This comment, moreover, drew responses such as "Very well said" and "You hit the nail on the head" (*yi zhen jian xue*). Of course, it is impossible to tell based on this evidence alone who these commenters may be. At the same time, it is telling that a caricature comparing Xi Jinping to Winnie the Pooh will be censored on the Chinese Internet, while blatantly bigoted statements, whatever the source, are allowed to flourish.[845]

As current events plainly show, the earlier dynamic, ethos, and discourse I have called transnationalist integrationism has become virtually untenable in the face of official and popular pressure as of the late 2010s. Only integrationism remains, as Yang Faming's address to the CPPCC shows. It is now next to impossible to argue that contact with Muslims outside China could enrich Muslims' belonging in China—which I have argued was the fundamental logic driving Chinese Muslims' early twentieth-century textual exchanges, participation in frontier development, and travels and studies abroad. Put slightly differently, one clearly sees how uncritical notions of "Arabization" and "Sinicization" persist in China today, and are growing more ossified than before. Under Xi Jinping, the CCP is perhaps for the first time embracing a

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[844] These comments follow the main text of Yang Faming, "Jianchi zongjiao Zhongguohua."

[845] On the censoring of images of Xi Jinping, see Javier C. Hernández, "China's Censors Ban Winnie the Pooh and the Letter 'N' After Xi's Power Grab," *The New York Times*, 28 February 2018.

set of homogenizing policies toward Muslims reminiscent of those of the GMD, and abandoning the earlier Stalinist pretense of letting nationalities "be themselves"—but backed by a far more powerful and uncompromising state. Rather than using terms such as "Arabization" and "Sinicization" descriptively, this study has attempted to join scholars and others who instead seek to historicize such concepts, and in so doing keep open the possibility of a more responsible conversation, and perhaps one day, a more open Chinese politics. The pressures Islam and Muslims face in China today, however, offer clear and frequent reminders of the reasons why the discourse of transnationalist integrationism arose among Chinese Muslims in the first place.

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al-Majalla al-jadida

al-Manār

al-Muqtataf (Beirut/Cairo)

al-Rabitah al-Sharqiyyah

al-Risala

al-Thaqafa

Umm al-Qura (Mecca)

Chinese

Beiping xinbao [*New Beiping*] (Beijing)

Bianjiang banyuekan [*Frontier Fortnightly*] (Nanjing)

Chenxi [*Dawn's Light*] (Nanjing)

Dongfang kuaibao [*Eastern Express*] (Shanghai)

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GLOSSARY OF CHINESE NAMES

n.b. This list is not exhaustive, but covers most of the major figures in this study, including several non-Chinese persons who appeared relatively frequently in Chinese-language writings by Chinese Muslims. Chinese characters are provided in traditional form, which is how they appear in most of the sources used in this study.

Ahmad Amin	愛敏博士 or similar
Ai Yizai	艾宜栽
Alsagoff	愛爾賽高夫 or similar, typically used for all members of the family
Bai Chongxi	白崇禧
Bai Shouyi	白壽彝
Chen Lifu	陈立夫
Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi)	蔣介石
Da Pusheng	達浦生
Ding Zhongming	定仲明
Farouq I of Egypt	埃王法魯克
Fu’ad I of Egypt	埃王福德
Ha Decheng	哈德成
Hai Weiliang	海維諒
He Yingqin	何應欽
Huang Zhenpan	黃鎮磐
Kong Xiangxi	孔祥熙
Li Tingbi	李廷弼
Ma Bufang	馬步芳

Ma Buqing	馬步青
Ma Chunyi	馬淳夷
Ma Debao	馬德寶
Ma Dexin a.k.a. Ma Fuchu	馬德新 a.k.a. 馬復初
Ma Fuxiang	馬福祥
Ma Hongdao	馬宏道
Ma Hongkui	馬鴻逵
Ma Hongyi	馬宏毅
Ma Jian	馬堅
Ma Kaitang	馬開堂
Ma Laichi	馬來遲
Ma Liang	馬良
Ma Lianyuan	馬聯元
Ma Linyi	馬鄰翼
Ma Songting (Shouling)	馬松亭（壽齡）
Ma Qi	馬麒
Ma Rulong	馬如龍
Ma Ruye	馬汝夜
Ma Tianying	馬天英
Ma Zhicheng	馬志程
Ma Zhongying	馬仲英
Muhammad al-Khidr Hussein	胡祖禮 or similar

Muhammad Farid Wajdi	斡哲底 or similar
Muhammad Ghallab	安拉補, 安亮補, or similar
Mustafa al-Maraghi	麻賴額 or similar
Na Xun	納訓
Na Zhong	納忠
Pang Shiqian	龐士謙
Sha Guozhen	沙國珍
Shi Juemin	石覺民
Shi Zizhou	時子周
Sun Shengwu	孫繩武
Sun Yanyi	孫燕翼
Sun Youming	孫幼銘
Tang Kesan	唐柯三
Wang Jingzhai (Wenqing)	王靜齋（文清）
Wang Kuan a.k.a. Wang Haoran	王寬 a.k.a. 王浩然
Wang Mengyang	王夢楊
Wang Zengshan	王曾善
Wu Zhongxin	吳忠信
Xu Xiaochu	許曉初
Xue Wenbo	薛文波
Yang Shu	楊樞
Yang Xingyuan	楊星垣

Zhang Bingduo	張秉鐸
Zhang Hongtu	張宏圖
Zhang Renjian	張人鑑
Zhang Zhaoli	張兆理
Zhao Yingxiang	趙映祥
Zhao Zhenwu (Zhao Bin)	趙振武（趙斌）
Zhou Zibin	周子賓
Zuo Zongtang	左宗棠